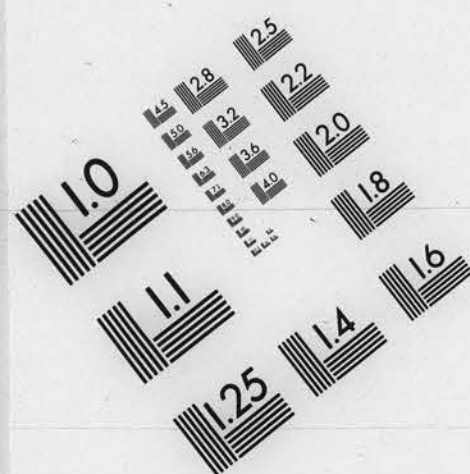


Journal, 1962.

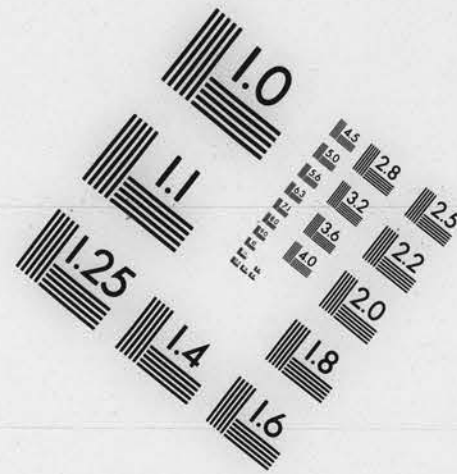




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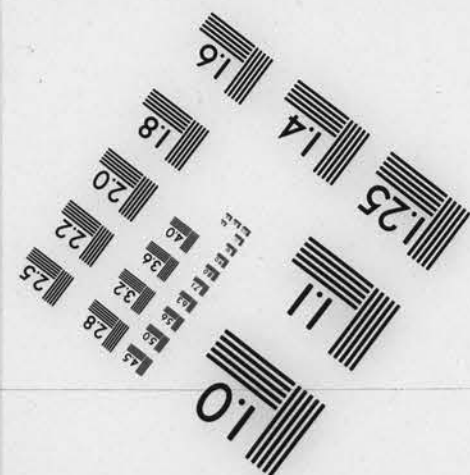
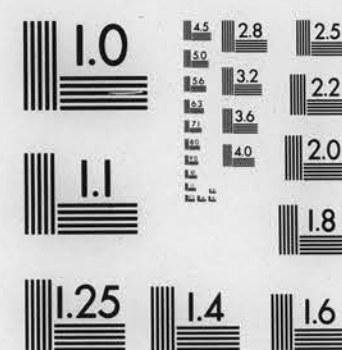
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Silver Spring, Maryland 20910  
301/587-8202



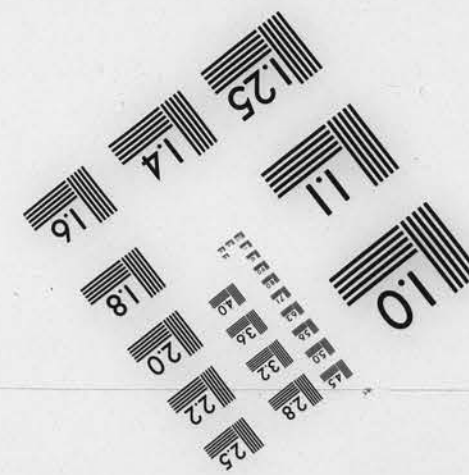
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11547

JOURNAL OF FRANCOIS MIGNON

- 1962 -

11548

P. S. -- at bottom of second page,  
I was remarking a convention will  
have among its members J. H. and  
Celeste at Atlantic City early in March.  
I shall advise precise dates when I learn as  
they hope to entertain little Miss Lee at  
dinner when passing through Lyme.....

Monday, January 1st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold.

For the first time I can remember, the plantation  
didn't work on New Year's day.

The clerk was in New Orleans attending the  
Sugar Bowl and, what with no mail to  
attend to, J. H. closed the store an hour or so  
after opening it.

As nobody was expected at the big house, the  
cook was given the day off and I dined pleasantly across  
the fence.

James came down early in the afternoon  
and we drove to town about 4:30, picked up  
Mrs. Walker's mother, Clara Genuing, and drove on  
to the Walkers for hot rum and black eyed  
peas or beans or whatever that vegetable is called that  
in Louisiana is said to bring good luck if  
eaten on New Year's.

The rum was pleasantly fragrant with  
the aroma of Peruvian bark, lemon, etc., and  
the gathering altogether pleasant. From the  
invitation, I had somehow gathered we were  
invited for supper but when black eyed peas were passed  
around with the hot rum, I concluded I  
had been mistaken.

Somehow the conversation turned to  
sea food and Mr. Walker remarked how nice it would  
be to drop in to the Grand Central  
Oyster Bar. I agreed. But somehow  
there was a confusion about a sea food bar



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in Hatchitoches and in Manhattan and before we realized it, the Walkers were taking us over the Grand Esce bridge and on beyond Clarence where Betty Carter had invited them to dine last summer. With Madam Genung as our responsibility for getting her back home, since we had brought her, the general pattern somehow lacked clarity. Be that as it may, on arriving at our destination, we found the place dark and a notice on the door saying it would be closed until Tuesday. We returned toward Hatchitoches, stopping at one cafe that seemed open but turned out to be just on the point of closing. Mrs. Walker said that the more she thought about her little pot roast at home, the bigger it seemed to be growing in her mind and so we returned from our starting point and partook of a delightful repast. Then we took la Genung home and James brought me home. It was a quiet day but altogether pleasant.

As I finished the above paragraph, Mrs. Walker called to report that a few minutes after we had quitted the house, their electricity had gone out. They inspected wiring, put in new fuses to no avail. Looking out, they saw no lights in neighboring houses and then learned that some youths, being pursued by police, had crashed into a light pole, cutting off juice for the entire area.

I learn from J. H. that R. E. A. or the Cotton Council, I forget which, is holding a pow-wow in Atlantic City early in March, he thought something like the 5th to the 11th, or some such. Celeste took up the thread and said she certainly hoped they would have an opportunity to meet the folks who were with them in the 20's under way.....

11550

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Tuesday, January 2nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and cool. When recalling all the dews and damps of the early part of December, I can but marvel at the favorable turn dominating the holiday season. I wish as much could have been said for the atmospheric conditions around Lyme.

The surprise of the day came in the mail when up turned a letter from the boy friend, posted in Paris. Penned in the familiar scrawl that proved too much for my secretaries, I shall hold it against Thursday when I may expect the services of a more practiced eye. Of course I might have had James struggle with it but I don't believe in letting letters from close friends get beyond the attention of impersonal secretaries.

James called this morning to say he would be down right after dinner. He said he had received a call from Horace Rand who made an appointment to meet him at the camp at 11:30 tomorrow. I suppose that will give them an opportunity to decide what of the camp furnishings will remain.

Celeste spent the day in Alexandria with the Cohen girls which meant that J. H. dined at noon with us at the big house.

He seems very happy about James having a camp on the river and asked me to tell him that if the Rands decided to retain their camp, James could have a site just a little further along the river just beyond Zelma's house. I did not



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mentioned that James had already received a  
call from Horace.

We supped in town and on our return, stepped off  
to see the artist who had executed four Picasso  
type of things. They were remarkably true to  
that form of expression and I could but marvel at the  
artist's versatility, her ability to express  
herself in such a manner, so radically different from  
her other modes. She had also painted four flower things  
which were really splendid, as definitely Monet of the  
19th century as the abstract things in the Picasso manner  
were mid 20th. James presented me with one  
of the latter and a pair of the flower things and  
I shall get no end of pleasure from them.

It's odd what one can encounter on a party line.  
I just dialed or started to dial  
I. S. Willard's residence to learn if she had returned.  
As I picked up the phone, I heard the merchant-  
planter speak my name in a conversation going on which  
turned out to be with the Gordon Randolphs of Celfax.  
Gordon and B. are old friends of the Rands and have known  
all of us here for decades. They had just learned from  
Horace Rand that the Rand camp was being returned to Melrose  
and had called J. H. to say they simply must have it but  
J. H. had explained that it had been promised James  
through me. He said if James decided to build further along  
the river, the Randolphs could most certainly have the  
Rand camp but otherwise, it would be the Randolphs who  
would have to build. And will indeed have to  
be the Randolphs who will have to build and I shall advise  
James of the whole business before he confers with  
Horace on the morrow. I did not bother  
to dial I. S. Willard but returned to this  
new but I shall communicate with James in all  
my evening chores and thence to  
my evening couch and may rest already have come to Lyme.....

11552

11552

Wednesday, January 3rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and chilly this morning. Cloudy and warmer  
tonight.

Having written the above, I paused to  
respond to a telephone call. It was  
James from Baton Rouge. He said he had  
met Horace Rand at the camp at 11:30,  
looked at the inside of the cabin, listened to  
Horace's valuation of the contents of the camp  
as one thousand dollars, told Horace he would consider  
the matter and drop him a line, after which they had  
parted, Horace heading for Alexandria, James for  
Baton Rouge. James says he could put in  
new furniture for one thousand dollars and wasn't  
dreaming of paying anything like such a sum for the  
things Horace had to sell. I think James is probably  
correct. Except for two tables and a small ice box,  
the furniture never struck me as anything out of the  
ordinary. Furthermore, although I don't know how  
long the Rands have had the camp, my guess is that  
it is about fifteen years, and most  
ordinary camp furniture, after such a period of useage,  
could scarcely be expected to bring replacement  
prices. Perhaps Horace, thinking  
the Registers have money, thought an easy dollar could be turned  
on the sale of the things but, obviously,  
he was wrong in thinking so.

James said he found three letters from Kay awaiting



11553

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James said he found three letters in Baton Rouge awaiting him, --that is, three from Kay and she seemed to be alright. She had supposed him to have been in Baton Rouge for several days past which is quite understandable. He will meet her in New Orleans Saturday.

Roberta Rue called me from the Red Cross today. She is taking Carmen's place while the latter remains in the hospital. La Durand, Carmen's sister, was spending most of her time looking after Carmen but then La Durand was taken sick and now she occupies a room in one wing of the hospital while Carmen recuperates in another. La Durand's husband, Jack, is in St. Martinsville burying his niece, killed the other day in a London auto crash which hospitalized her husband. There seems to be lots going on among the Breazeales.

The artist is on vacation. Dereatha, the cook, told me at supper tonight that the artist had employed her to driver her to town this afternoon. The artist is visiting her Cousin Sugar Baby whose house is next door to the one where Pa lives. The artist will remain until Saturday evening and may the romance between her and Pa flourish. It is all very complicate, this romance with Pa. In the first place, it is the artist who does most of the courting. In the second place, Cousin Sugar Baby is in the negro bracket, as is the artist. Now Pa, being a mulatto, cannot visit Cousin Sugar Baby's house in broad daylight and that is because the house next door where he dwells is occupied by a mulatto and there's still enough of the old-fashioned prejudice in the neighborhood to make it all this sounds silly, his daughter is the way it is and that is that.....

11554

11554

Thursday, January 4th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Drizzle all day but moderately warm. Tornado warnings for the Shreveport area were issued this afternoon to last until 10 tonight. There is quite a thunder storm going on here at present and we are promised cooler weather and some more rain for the morrow.

I got around to read the Paris letter today. It would be pleasant to see the boy friend and I'm sure it would be enlightening to catch glimpses of the Far East as viewed through Ambassador Belle's optics. But I find the present moment too unsettled for month long visits, what with wackypeople in and about and my own recuperation from a half month's visit not yet completed. I shall pen a line forthwith suggesting a visitation later in the season. I should at least like to get the Register invasion settled before undertaking another campaign.

The card from D. D. Carter says he for himself. I reckon we shall be occupying quite a long time on the New South. Sister says. At supper I discovered Sister had just blown in, after having taken her daughter back to Baton Rouge. She had stopped at Blythe's on her way here and said Blythe was just getting over the flu. Sister was sorry to learn Blythe had given up the camp. I assume Blythe didn't mention who had taken a lease on the place.

Carmen called me from her hospital bed this afternoon. She said that on Wednesday the lady doctor had told her she might go home on Friday if the weather improves. She said she did not see the lady doctor today as the latter has flu or is catching her breath at home, worn down by nervous exhaustion. The domestic problems in the lady doctor's home must be pretty wearing, what with Don refusing either physical or mental treatments, and everyone seems to agree he stands greatly in need of both.



11555

The artist's pictures are increasing in popular demand, it would appear. I am told two different groups passed by the house today, bent on making purchases and Sister said she had brought five boards with her to paint pictures on for her but learn the artist was not at home. I wonder how things are progressing at Cousin Sugar Baby's.

At the coffee hour this morning I learned from mine hostess that she had been at the hospital yesterday afternoon where she had seen several people. -- I think as member of the Service League, she serves coffee there occasionally. She mentioned seeing Mr. Earnest, the retired overseer, who still lives on the plantation just below the garden. He is somewhat senile and drinks quite heavily. Around Christmas he broke his arm when he fell off his gallery. He was adamant, however, about not seeing a physician and his wishes were respected. After three days, however, when he began sobbing, the swelling was so considerable and the swelling so great that he consented to being taken to see a physician in town and was at once put in the hospital. What physical stamina must be his for although in his 70's, he still is going strong in spite of the punishment to which he always seems to have put his body.

I find myself so often thinking of little Miss Lee and the hurly-burly of her existence during the entire autumnal season. And somehow it seems to me I can comprehend a little more completely how great was her exhaustion as, objectively, I observe Lestan these days as he emerges from the helter-skelter of the holiday season. I am holding the thought that little Miss Lee may have a measure of quiet rest between now and taking off time and being able to try to avoid getting too bogged down

11556

Friday, January 5th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and cold. The radio says the snow storms sweeping the Great Plains seem generally headed northeasterly. I hope they play out before reaching you know where.

I got a letter off to Paris recommending the Louisiana visit be postponed for a little while.

Our Shreveport visitor lingers on. This morning she phoned Dan's wife, inviting her to dine with us at noon. They were a little late coming to dinner and somehow I missed them when they passed by Yucca afterward.

I gave I. S. Willard a buzz tonight but got no response. Perhaps she is in Washington or New York or Baton Rouge or New Orleans. Like the Ramseys, the Belles so are the Willards, gifted people alright but too elusive for me to attempt keeping up with and too uncommunicative to get nervous about.

Carmen called me this afternoon from her home where she seems to be happy to find herself. Her sister remains at the hospital but expects to return home with Carmen shortly, perhaps Monday.

In spite of all the weather the country to the north of us has been having in the last 24 hours, I am surprised how clearly radio reception has been from that direction. I usually get Edward Morgan over an ABC station in Oklahoma City



11557

clearly enough but tonight when I tuned in a few minutes before 6:15, I discovered I was getting the concluding sentences of his broadcast which was coming from --of all places, -- Coffeville, Kansas, where ever that may be. I did some further searching at 6:15 sharp and picked up Oklahoma City without any difficulty. I find that KDKH, Pittsburg, comes in with vast clarity and so does some station from Boston, often more clearly than fifty thousand watt stations in New Orleans which doesn't seem to make any sense at all.

I haven't heard any complaints from the Emmet and Erwin contingent as yet although they might be justified if they complained a little since I have been robbing a few duck eggs from their nest every now and then. I think a duck can not hatch more than a dozen eggs since a dozen seems about all that can be covered to give sufficient warmth for performing the miracles. Thus far 19 eggs have been deposited at this laying effort and I am gathering the surplus against put them into somebody's brooder or incubator when local setting starts in seriously, following the present sprint of laying. I have always been surprised that hens and ducks don't seem to mind if the eggs they lay are removed from their nests when they are meditating on begotting offspring. I don't know but I imagine some birds would cast about for another nest if eggs disappeared too regularly from the one they fashion for housing their eggs. Perhaps chickens and ducks know they are going to lay more eggs than they can possibly manage to park on anyway. It seems to me I recall one duck that deposited some sixty odd before finally getting down to the business of setting. Perhaps in the present situation, the duck doesn't mind the eggs being removed since she may be smart enough to realize that it is doubtful if any the little ones she hatches will escape marauders while these eggs taken for the incubator are likely to bring more little ones to maturity. And so much for poultry and people about whom for the most part I understand the one almost as much as the other.....

11558

Sunday, January 7th, 1962.

Memorandum:

I haven't heard a report of weather in Lyme but from Friday night's predictions, I assume it has been rough. It froze here on Friday night but not very hard. Last night it was supposed to drop to 22 but didn't get below 31 and thanks to today's sunshine, it warmed considerably. I take it the midwest is still heavily blanketed but I hold the thought the snow showers may have turned to rain before reaching Lyme.

Our Shreveport visitor left Saturday morning and the balance of the week was pleasant enough. Even as on a previous visit, so on this last one, she announced she had been commissioned to bring me many plants from Baton Rouge, New Roads or somewhere in South Louisiana but, even as before, went on to say that she had already disposed of them before reaching here. Somebody somewhere will find it odd-ish on my part that I did not acknowledge the gift but I cannot worry about that.

And speaking of gifts, I am reminded I wanted to touch on Mont St. Michel et Chartres. For almost a year I had a couple of old and rare shops casting about in hopes of finding an edition as early as least as 1904 of the Adams opus with a view of presenting it to little Miss Lee. Picture my surprise, after quite a lot of correspondence during the past six months, one of the shops suddenly came up with the modern paperback edition with nothing more than an invoice to indicate they had completed their part of the transaction. I was so disappointed and yet at the same time I had to laugh and accordingly sent along the only thing that did come to hand even though there was no excuse for the shop sending it.. I suppose if I had had them looking for an incunabula edition ~~and then I had them looking for an incunabula edition~~ anything



11559

11559

I guess that last line gummed up a little. What I was saying was to the effect that I suppose, had I been asking the old and rare collector to find me an Incanabula Bible, he would have sent me a 1961 edition had he failed to discover one printed prior to 1500. Smile.

Juanita A. came down for dinner today, her husband being out of town. She says she has been pretty busy, trying to unpack and set her house to rights, a task that continues to be somewhat perplexing as to what to do next since the carpenters are still working on the inside of the new house.

I finally got round to read hurriedly the Enterprise summation of the 1961 Parish events and discovered why Carmen recommended it so highly, -- she appears in it a couple of times. I must confess I had completely forgotten until it was touched on in the summary that Cane River Memo had received a favorable rating by the Press Association last year. It seems to me that annual meeting is usually held the last week in January and that would be quite a time stretch for anyone with as flimsy a memory as mine. I do recall, however, that last summer or sometime it was said the Cane River Memo got a prize in the National Press Association but after the award had been given, it was discovered that the State Press Association had failed to send it its annual dues on time and that accordingly the award had been withdrawn. It is said the State official was in the midst of taking off for the Near East or some such place, -- persia or somewhere, and had simply forgotten any thing so tag end as the Association's dues.

Saturday's post brought letters from Bob Wilson, James and so on. The latter wrote he was picking up the wife at the airport on Saturday. He reported having had a very good time. Smile..... I am glad although not quite

11560

11560

Monday, January 8th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold.

I was much interested in two separated and unrelated episodes this afternoon, each touching vaguely on the work of the local artist.

I had to go to the store about 2:30 and J. H. spoke to me about having the artist do a few sketches. As is his custom, he plans this year, shortly after the opening of Congress, to send pecaness to Louisiana's two Senators and half dozen representatives. Formerly he has sent socks of pecaness but Ellender makes such a racket about preferring shelled pecaness that this year he is going to send shelled ones to everyone. He told me he had been trying to get some plain tin boxes and asked me what I thought about having the artist paint a primitive on each. I told him I thought the plan excellent. He said he wished he could get some back copies of Cane River Memo to enclose in the boxes. I told him I could procure the folders containing the reproduction of the Cane River Memo about the Parish's best known contemporary woman, the one carrying the likeness of Ghana, inside and outside. He thought that a splendid idea. It is understood such gifts circulate among friends in the Capitol and possibly at their homes. I thought of a couple of Representatives, especially Wagner from North Louisiana, recently elected and what a hill billy he is and how nice it would be to see a Hunter primitive on the Wagner desk in the Capitol but, naturally, I didn't voice this thought to J. H. I told him to let me know when he got the boxes and I would see what I could do. He said he thought some sketch like that appearing on the tile would be nice. I agreed but said I thought that even more appropriate, in view of the pecaness the boxes would contain, would be a painting of a pecane gathering number and he seemed to like that even better. This would avoid the lavish use of white paint which the artist always employs on cotton which takes long-long to dry and on tin might take for ever.



11561

Returning to Yucca, I responded to my 'phone which was ringing when I entered. It was Carmen, back on the Red Cross job. She said she had had an idea after talking with me this mornin and had called the President of the Chamber of Commerce, -- Jack Britton, and the Mayor, Ray Scott, and both had applauded and asked her to get an estimate of costs and they would try to put through the thing. Her thought was thatatchitoches should send the young lady who was Queen of the Christmas Festival to the Mardi Gras Ball in Washington this year. Carmen declared she hadn't thought about a chaperon going with the Festival Queen but Messrs Britton and Scott had suggested such a chaperon be included and that Carmen herself fill that role. Carmen has never been to the East Coast and relishes the thought of making Washington and then skipping up to New York. She says she mentioned proper souvenirs from Hatchitoches be sent along for the representative attending the ball to distributed and that it was agreed that the book on Hatchitoches and the Cane River Harvest tile be the items chosen.

It seems to me Harry Chockley headed the Louisiana MardiGras ball two or three years back and, if memory serves, it is held on or about the same time the New Orleans Fat Tuesday is celebrated, -- or possibly the Saturday night before. At the moment I have no idea when Mardi Gras comes this year but probably some time in March. This will give me ample time to order some more tiles if the Breazeale junket comes off and the City Fathers decide to distribute Cane River Harvest tiles broadside along the Potomac.

I thought it interesting both these matters should have come up so close upon one another's heels. Even now, although several hours have elapsed, I laugh every time I think of the surprise and annoyance that is going to be experienced when Washington from the Pelican State receive the gift bearing an original Hunter and a picture of his and class citizen with an article about him.

11562

Tuesday, January 9th, 1962.

Memorandum:

This ninth of January is one which will be often mentioned by weather experts in future years for the weather has really been exceptional since about 7 this morning.

It had been sleeting in Shreveport, according to the radio, since about 4 or 5 o'clock but the sleet didn't arrive here until about 7 and seemed to come from the northeast although the full force of the storm itself is moving northeasterly and seemingly shouldn't be sending the stuff in the opposite direction.

The sprinkles turned into pellets more like grains of salt than flakes and kept going all day as the thermometer dropped down into the teens.

Because the pellets were fairly dry, they bounced off leaves and twigs and didn't break things down much. Seen the roofs and lawns were white-white and there were some pretty combinations that an expert in color filming could have made something out of. A case in point was the hedge of nandina in the African House neighborhood. Somehow the bronze-like leaves and the big clusters of scarlet berries looked twice as colorful when surrounded by a blanket of pure white and then add to this setting the watered-silk blue of a peacock right beneath the flaming nandina and you have a cent ast of colors as striking as anything one could imagine.

Fortunately only two or three inches of white stuff settled down on the place and immediately it formed a foundation like frosting on a cake, but a big cake and a thick icing strong enough to suport a grand old lady.



11563

I guess the bottom lines got gummed up again. I was saying about the nice fat box from Lyme, containing such an excellent collection of boards came to hand safely and it is wonderful to have these to draw on when doing business with the local artist whose efforts I want to keep steadily employed for a while in anticipation of impending demands on her handiwork. I guess I have orders for about a dozen of her creations and this unexpected windfall will come in wonderfully well and especially at this very moment.

The artist called me this evening to say she had been staying in the house all day, as well she might, and that she would have a couple of things for me on the morrow. She also wondered if I had any boards and I told her about the arrival of the package from Lyme. You can see readily enough how opportune was little Miss Lee's inspiration.

It's interesting that the 'phone service between here and town isn't functioning but one can dial subscribers on the Capekiver circuit and get through to them. I tried dialing the operator in town, hoping to get through and ask that dialing be done for town numbers through that office but although the operator's signal rings vigorously enough, it obviously isn't getting through since no response is forthcoming.

It is said people in town are having a rougher time than folks in the country since town is supplied for heat by a gas plant that cannot supply fuel fast enough to keep ahead of the demand for warming houses in the present low temperatures. The local source of heat comes from butane gas brought by truck and so there is no special supply for the current blizzard which is supposed to last for another couple of days and may

Lyme is forcing heat

11564

Wednesday, January 10th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold.

The thermometer got down to about 8 above and neve did make it above 14 during the day in spite of the cloudless sky and dazzling sunshine. Tonight it will dip to zero or a little below according to the Weather Bureau which sound much better than some place in Colorado where it was 57 degrees below last night.

Although water continue flowing along evenly enough last night and this morning, it was felt it would be better to cut off the entire system against tonight's freeze. I accordingly filled up the hot tub and a flock of buckets, regretting the "drought" and hilding the thought a warm spell may develop unexpectedly so the system can be restored within a day or so.....interruption..... Carmen calling to tell me of her adventures trying to drive her car from the tree into her garage.

One can still walk any place about the gardens on a solid cake of ice, two or three inches thick. The peacock seem somewhat astonished by the whole business and since they seem to have difficulty pecking at corn on ice and somehow don't seem to see the biscuits and bread, I am feeding them inside the Unicorn House. Before the largest bird discovered the hazards of operating atop ice cakes, he came to meet me this morning as usual and sprang up to take a biscuit from my hand-as is his custom but somehow he lost his balance and sat down with a clap on his magnificent tail which he didn't appear to think funny when I laughed.

That all schools should be closed is understandable



11565

11565

but what strikes one as almost incredible is the fact that all afternoon and evening frolics have been called off, both in and out of town. I believe Max Chaplin and some of the other girls were scheduled to make merry down this way tonight but that, of course, had to be given up, so you can readily understand how dreadful things must really be.

I saw the postman this morning who had arrived at the office just before I did. He uses a pick-up truck to make his rounds from Bayou Metchen but this morning he was in a regular passenger car. He said his truck tended to slide more than a car and all along his route whenever there was a letter box beside the high where he can always drop the letters without getting out of his car, he now has to stop in the middle of the road and get out and go over on foot to the box since the curve of the road from center to side is such that the car, if he attempts to approach within reach of the box, invariably slides right on over into the ditch.

I realize all this makes might dull reading but I relate it regardless, thinking it may give some indication of how things turn in a locality where this sort of weather is unusual and no thought about ice hazards go into the general scheme of planning either for road contours or filling up bridge tables.

Once or twice of late I have heard some thing on the radio about The New York Times printing a west coast edition, beginning around April, I believe. I wish the Times would do a Middle West edition where I think a lot of people need it and where I should think it would have a circulation even greater than on the West Coast. Perhaps there will be one later if the first outside Manhattan venture proves successful.....

11566

11566

Thursday, January 11th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair to partly cloudy and cold with last night's low at 10 and today's high at 20. We are promised some more of the same readings for the morrow. In spite of sunshine, ice doesn't re-act much when the thermometer stands a dozen degrees below freezing. I especially regret the killing of the orange trees between New Orleans and the Gulf for they produce the juiciest oranges in the world and it is said about 4 years is required to bring new trees into production.

You may recall, on the Cane River front, that the artist's former residence was the third house below the spillway on the east side of the highway. The first house below the spillway has long been occupied by Madame Rita Metoyer, now in her 80's.

The house burned to the ground this morning about 7, consuming everything except Madame Rita who got out.

She thought her butane gas supply had played out and accordingly put some kindling in the fireplace and set a match to it whereupon the whole room burst into flames. She probably thought she had turned off the gas stove but had not. Racing out of doors, she found neighbors coming to her aid but those who might have gone inside to rescue furniture found themselves busy trying to keep Madame Rita from rushing back into the building.

I don't know if she had any antiques of value. At one time she had an oil portrait of Francois Metoyer,



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brother of Augustin, probably painted in the 1820's or 1830's. I liked the portrait very much but regretted that Madame Rita, not too stable mentally, had once sent or taken it to Alexandria where she prevailed upon someone who obviously knew nothing about resoration, to freshen up the face, probably view a view to making it unmistakably white. The result was a surprising visage with a color just about the whiteness of this sheet of paper. Whether the super-white faced Francois went up in smoke or not, I don't know but assume it did.

I assume nobody advised the telephone company that the Metoyer residence had been destroyed by fire. In any event, the line on which Madame Rita, the artist and several others were all hooked up gave only a busy signal all day, as I discovered when I made several attempts, first to reach the artist, and then to see if I could contact anyone else on that same line. I asked the operator to see if she could have any success but she reported she could get no signal at all. That reminded me of something James told me about one of his unsuccessful attempts to reach me from Baton Rouge. It would appear the operator in Hachiteches wasn't too efficient or, perhaps, too desirous of having the call get through since instead of being connected with 7273 in Cane River he was connected with the Fire Department in Hachiteches, 2112.

I listened to the President's State of the Union message, convinced it was good and persuaded Congress would never enact much of it. I was especially interested to learn from one commentator that the House had passed a bill to issue bonds to the states so that the bonds would be sold at a discount and the states would be able to pay the bonds at a lower cost. I was also interested to learn that the House had passed a bill to pay the states for the bonds at a lower cost.

11568

11568

Friday, January 12th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold. It was one or two degrees below zero last night but it will sag only to 15 or 18 tonight, it is said. The ice sheet continues as firm as ever and the water pipes frozen as tight as during the past several days. Somehow I got my long beard removed this afternoon but I'm not quite sure how I turned the trick. Just as I finished, I tipped over a bucket full of water which, I hope, tended to clean the floor a little, - a chore I should never have voluntarily undertaken at this stage of the game.

Mail increased in volume today but that meant little to me since none of the secretaries are thawed out as yet but I reckon they will be astir on the morrow.

John Wenk came in from L.S. U. last night. He remained in bed longer than others and so I missed him at breakfast.

The cook told me later in the day that he had expressed the hope when he did get up that she had not served water out of the pitcher this morning at breakfast since he had wanted to wash his hands last night, and finding the faucets non-operative, he had washed his hands in the water pitcher and had not thrown out the water afterward. I think a college youth, even if he never had any civilizing influences at home, ought to have known better than to indulge in such a performance.

Along about 5 this evening, the artist's phone service had been restored and she called me to gossip for a little. She said that Madame Rita was complaining because she hadn't burned up in the house yesterday since she was unable to save any of her clothes and one might just as well be dead without fine feathers. The artist disagreed with her and said she wouldn't care if she didn't have anything on in spite of the cold weather, just matters the Metoyers and the Hunters never would agree.



11569

At the coffee hour this morning I was given a detailed account of new items in the wardrobe having been assembled for current winter and early spring social activities. I shall not pass along details since, I must confess, I wasn't sufficiently intrigued to pay much attention to the finer points. The Cotton Council pew-wow gets under way the weekend of January 27-28th, at the same time the Press Association gathers in the Crescent city. Perhaps I shall get a report eventually from two points of view concerning the Council gathering, one filed by a participant, the other by a reporter.

The R.E.A. gathering at Atlantic is scheduled for "the first week in March", and there will be a day or so in Manhattan, after which the R.E.A. special moves on to Canga. Eventually, perhaps, I shall have a double-barrelled report concerning the Manhattan interlude. I suppose more precise timing on the Manhattan agenda may come to hand and, of course, I shall pass some along.

I find myself thinking so often of Herman Fletcher  
and his impending marriage to the former Mrs. Don  
Lester. Herman is old enough to know  
better than to get tangled up with a  
social butterfly and yet entangled he apparently  
must go himself. It is nevertheless depressing  
to see the results before the marriage is consummated  
and I suppose one might as well turn to the  
Greek tragedies and concentrate on their interpre-  
tations of Fate in forces governing men's lives to sense how  
inevitable such patterns develop and carry through. Mrs.  
Don Lester probably got half her husband's money at the time  
of the divorce and that might help but it probably  
takes a lot and Herman hasn't any if a lady simply must  
crank up the family plane in "atchitoches"  
and fly to Milwaukee every time she wants her hair fixed.  
There are no other sources of values and poor Herman is too  
timid to suddenly get mixed down in such  
gambling ventures. I gather way in her own family or

11570

Sunday, January ~~11~~<sup>14</sup>th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Tonight the weather tune, praise the Lord, is different. It started warming Saturday morning. Around 2 in the afternoon, Fug<sub>a</sub>hou and Ezra came to tell me the pipes had been de-frosted and that I might take my Saturday bath. They were somewhat taken aback to discover on their arrival that I was already splashing a<sub>a</sub>roud in a tub full ow hot water and soap suds. J. H. thought we better cut off the water system again at sundown. He asked me what I thought. I thought we migh leave it on. Accordingly, it was shut off. As the thermometer did not drop below the mid 40's, however, things could be turned on again earl this morning giving me another opportunity to d<sub>e</sub>ve into the tub and luxuriate unendingly.

John returned to L. S. U. Saturday night. He seldom listens to radio, he says. I listened at 4 p.m., and intended telling him that L. S. U. had just gone on the air, asking their students to return before Tuesday but by the time I was located him, he had already hopped a ride and was returning to Baton Rouge.

I got so much delight by Saturday's post which was large, most of which remains unread. There was a letter from Lyme that delighted me. Reference was made to the package of boards recently forwarded and while I agree they are grand for wrapping tiles, they are as such quality as to make canvas for the artist and I think I shall continue employing them for that purpose for a while at least.

that there was a letter from James, saying that Sunday. I suppose the Wildard automobile is



11571

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James said I. S. Willard, having returned by air from Washington, was in Baton Rouge and would drive to Natchitoches with them this Sunday. The Louisianne Motel called me this morning, telling me the same thing. I figured I would be seeing the Registers for supper tonight and so I announced I would not sup across the fence when I passed that way to break bread with them at noon. I called I. S. Willard at 4:05 and found her at home. I assumed I would be hearing from the Registers shortly, although, to be on the safe side, I had declined an invitation to them and me to dine with the Walkers, tonight.

Well, that was just as it should have been since I didn't hear from the Registers until 6:30 tonight and as it was raining and as they were having windshield wiper difficulties, nobody said anything about getting together tonight which pleases me no end since it will give me a opportunity to knock off a column which I had better write for a couple of tursdays hence, what with the Walkers planning to be in the Crescent City this coming weekend. I think I shall do something casual under some such title as Cane River Deep Freeze.

I shall be hungry by the time I have done that and since there is a ton of food in the house, I ought to be able to go on quite a bender when I get around to it. It seems to me I know where there is a can of creamed lobster and I think I shall put some on a couple of slices of toast which ought to make a step in the right direction and whatever happens after that doesn't really matter for by then I shall be sleepy and well rounded about the middle.

It was so nice having the Wednesday note from Lyme and I hold the thought there was a chance to catch one's breath over the weekend.....

11572

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P.S. at bottom of last page, I was saying many cars and much illumination tonight suggests a party in full swing across the fence at the conclusion of a day spent in Alexandria by Celeste, in Shreveport by J. H.....

Monday, January 15th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and cool, with a nice fat moon tonight and frostwhitening the greensward from which yesterday's rains washed away the ice. It will drop only to 28, however, and pretty weather with higher temperatures are scheduled for the morrow.

He asked me to make myself friendly with his wife" said Dereatha, the cook, when I met her going to the front gate as she was coming to prepare supper. I thought the expression quite charming and individualistic and, all in all, real CaneRiver-ish.

Kay and James had come down about 4:30 to pick me up and James had carried some Hunter creations to Yucca where he wanted to park them. Dereatha had come along as he was taking them out of the car and so she had chatted with Kay until James had returned for another package and I had gone ahead of him to see Kay. I like to roll that expression over on my tongue:

"Mr. Pipes say he wanted me to make myself friendly with his wife....."

Each remembered the other from the first time they had seen each other several years ago when Kay and Aunt Willie had had dinner at the hi house with me. I find it pleasant that Dereatha and the Registers renew the acquaintance since they will probably see a lot of each other when the Registers take over the Rand camp since that will make them and Dereatha's family neighbors.

Thus far, and this seems odd, the artist doesn't seem to have learned that the Rand Camp is passing to the



11573

Registers. I am sure that if she had, she would be asking me about the Registers keeping her in mind as servant. Thus far five different people, both ladies and gentlemen, have come to me to say that they had heard Mr. Pipes had planned to lease the Rnd camp and that they would like to work for him.

I don't know how Kay's health is. They say she looks alright but I think she must be rather frail. She still uses crutches and must tire rather quickly for she doesn't arise until 10 or 10:30 and usually takes a nap in the afternoon. Instead of taking one today, she came down here but didn't attempt coming to the house since the ground was so soft the crutches would have sunk in the earth at every step. We drove to town and chatted until 7:30 at the motel when James prepared something for her to eat as she did not care of go out. James and I went on to the town house, returning to the motel where Kay, after a rest, was up and about and they brought me home about 10:30.

They told me that I. S. Willard had invited them and me to the Country Club tomorrow night. They said she felt sure I would accept if they were to be in the party. I am not much of a Country Clubber, as you know, but I did accept to make a foursome for I. S. Willard. They told me something that surprised me, to wit, that I. S. Willard had mentioned on Sunday when driving up with them that when she had gone to Bronxville to see her mother-in-law at Christmas time, she had met a man who had been her former husband, happened to visit her and she had gathered he was dead. The night illuminations suggests a

11574

Tuesday, January 16th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and chilly with ice continuing on the pot and frost on the windshield.

Tonight I dined at the Country Club under circumstances that suited me to a T.

James came down with Kay, stopping off at the artist's, and arriving here at 6. Kay did not descend from her horseless carriage when James came to get me. Our plan was to proceed to town, stop at I. S. Willard's and then proceed to dinner. On arriving in town, however, it was noted that the gas tank which had been half full when starting for Melrose, was just about empty. We stopped at a service station where it was found at a glance that the gas pump in the car was acting up and would require repair on the morrow. We accordingly drove to the Louisianne where we called I. S. Willard, asking her to make use of her fine carosse which she did promptly.

She had called me early in the afternoon to say that she had discovered that the Country Club, always going great guns on Wednesday night and throughout the balance of the week, usually did not serve anything on Monday and next to nothing on Tuesday except for special parties and therefore there would probably be very few people there and asked if I thought it would seem to lonely a place for Kay and James. I didn't think so.

And so we drove or rather I. S. Willard drove us to the Country Club around 7:30 or 8 and ours seemed to be the only car in sight. In the main hall, we found no one and not a soul in sight. We proceeded to the bar for



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a drink. A colored boy in spotless white presided over the bar and easily attended to the wants of his four customers. The chef appeared, also colored, and settled one or two little details with our hostess. Another colored youth, a waiter, had prepared a table in the main hall, in front of the fire place, and I must say it was as cherry a huge room as one would be likely to find. There was no feeling of emptiness somehow which seems odd. We had a very pleasant dinner, revolving around steak and conversation was jolly and the service perfect. Around 9:30 we walked about the place a little to give Kay and James some notion as to its layout and pulled back the big draperies to view the outside surroundings and then departed, having seen no guests at all and only the barman, the chef and the waiter. It is so pleasant being able to dine out and not being constantly interrupted by people impinging on one's dinner. We did not stop in town but came directly to the house where I got out and the folks drove back to town.

My telephone was ringing when I came in. It was Mrs. Walker saying she had just received a telegram, a long telegram, in fact, from New York, from Esther Lake, I believe, the friend of Mrs. Roosevelt. Mrs. Walker had sent Miss Lake a belated Christmas gift in the form of a Cane River primitive and the recipient had been so entranced that she had sent a wire of acknowledgement, bubbling over with enthusiasm. I don't know La Lake's address but I assume she is in the Manhattan phone book. I am told she is a reader of Cane River Memoirs but I have never received a word directly from her and shall not write unless Mrs. Walker passes along the address. In the mean time it is pleasant to know the primitive pictures find merit in her eyes and especially so since through her they will probably come to the attention of a wide circle of people. James has a cold but continues searching out possible home sites. He never liked the tablet size of the Enterpriser and will be glad to

11576

Wednesday, January 17th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and chilly.

The Register pursuit of real estate continues getting no where. I talked with both Kay and James around noon. James was very enthusiastic about a Williams Avenue property with a two story house on a lot five hundred feet in depth bordering on the river. The house included adequate space, it seemed, with a 30 foot square living room/20 foot square bedrooms and so on. Kay said they were going to see it during the afternoon and thought the location alone made it a good real estate investment and the price was less than half her annual Federal taxes. They said they would come down and pick me up for dinner which they did. But it turned out that the property did not suit Kay who seems to want a house on a hill, surrounded by woodland when she is looking over a river front property. And so another agent took them to a place on a hill with an ante bellum house, somewhere in the region where the Aswell property is situated. But that property wasn't desirable since it did not have a river running along the top of the hill and so on and so on and so on.

When I talked with Kay at noon, she said she thought they would be returning to Baton Rouge on the morrow since it appeared that during the afternoon they would have determined upon a home. By dinner time it would seem they will not be going home for another few days since the quest for a home must go on. James says he is convinced they will never find anything that will suit Kay and that they will still be occupying the Baton Rouge apartment when Kay leaves in February for another visit to the Bluff.



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Kay doesn't know that the Rand camp has been leased by James on his own hook. I think he is right in not telling her about it before they decide on some permanent home, if, indeed, she ever makes up her mind on that score. I must say, however, I am surprised somebody or other, unwittingly, hasn't dropped word about the camp in her presence before now.

At the coffee hour this morning, Celeste remarked that B. Randolph had again called J. H. last night, urging them to let them have the Rand camp. I am a little surprised they pursue that object so persistently after J. H. has told them that James already has it. But perhaps B. is right in not giving up for if Kay doesn't eventually make up her mind, perhaps James will wash his hands of everything pertaining to Hatchiteches Parish real estate. Home front, the artist continues with her painting and has been hitting off some compositions which, in years to come, I sincerely believe, will occupy places of distinction in the better public and private collections. She has turned out some floral things that are truly remarkable and some plantation things that are excellent. I selected one this afternoon and carried it in to town, leaving it at The Enterprise for Mrs. Walker to send to her friend in the Morgan Library, -- a gin or cotton house scene, all a-drip with color. At the moment, -- and the changes come frequently, the artist is in a sort of Degas frame of mind in the floral section and yet, on the same day, tosses off an occasional Picasso-type thing that astonishes one. I think she herself doesn't know which of her things are remarkable and which aren't and it is surprising how many of them are splendid.....

11578

11578

Thursday, January 18th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Rainy all day and drizzling tonight with the temperature on the chill side.

The child, expected by Juanita and Pat on November 25th, arrived on January 17th. The sex is male, much to the delight of his papa, I have no doubt. I suppose he will bear the name of Joseph Marion Henry, 3rd. Mother and child are doing fine, I am told, and Pat is said to be generally enchanted.

James called or rather didn't call at 1 o'clock, but I called the Louistanne at 2 and James said they had been delayed in having their luncheon or breakfast or whatever they eat at that hour of the day.

There had been talk about dining in town but with the appearance of mist that might turn into fog, the dinner engagement was cancelled but James said he would like to come down for a couple of hours, arriving within the hour and leaving before night and the mist settled down.

A little after 3 he telephoned again, and I was glad I was sitting down because he said they had found a rent house in Pecane Park. I told



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I thought that was wonderful, what with having neighbors in the Dan Henrys, the Joe Henrys and the Pat Henrys. I didn't throw in the one billion dogs and two billion kids in the area.

Then Kay spoke with me and I congratulated her on having found a place and she thought it would be so convenient to base to operate from in their quest for just the kind of property they wanted to obtain, either already built or to be built.

Pecane Park would be the last place in Natchitoches I would ever rent but I suppose James is worn out with the cross he has been bearing and probably figures getting my place in Natchitoches now and moving in the Baton Rouge furniture provide a possibility of being able to get Kay into the frame of mind to find something in the Natchitoches area. Of course I must confess I cannot for the life of me imagine why either of them should want to settle in Natchitoches since they know nobody in the area save I. S. Willard, Miss Briarwood Dorman, the artist and me but, then, there's no accounting for taste.

I was glad to hear from Michael Persall.

J. H. went to New Orleans today and will spend the night there. My neighbor across the fence seems to be braving it out at home but I imagine she may or may not have some girl friends with her. It would be a kind of me to spend the evening with her if she is alone but I am not disturbing her, on the assumption she has guests or is well contented by herself and it seems to me it is better not to inaugurate antique baby sitting before one runs out of courage to spend at least one evening alone.

As a matter of fact, I so relish the opportunity to spend an evening by myself that I want to make the most of it while I am able to for I assume when folks get in town they are busy for one of my inclinations.

11580

11580

Friday, January 19th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and chilly. It appears the current blizzard sweeping out of the Texas panhandle is moving eastward rather than southward. From this I gather we may escape the snow now blanketing Kansas, Arkansas and such like.

My agents reported Mr. Pipes was at the artist's house this morning. I reckon James didn't want to worry me by dropping in unannounced. I had expected to dine with them tonight but when I talked with both James and Kay around 1, they envisioned foggy weather for tonight and thought it better if we did not try braving the mists after dark. I guess what was really up was the fact that Kay was probably tired and wanted to fold up early in view of their plans to return to Baton Rouge tomorrow morning.

I was delighted to remain at home and smiled to myself as I recalled how a question of fog never arose during the Christmas holidays to discourage road running although I should have welcomed a little now and then.

Kay said she would call me tonight to say Goodbye and James said he would come down this afternoon for a little chit-chat. I confided that I was expecting I. S. Willard at 1:30 to give me a hand on scaling down a section of a mural I wanted to use eventually for a tile and that I felt we would have that chore well wrapped up by 3.

Net result: James got here at 1:30 and I. S. Willard at a quarter of 3.

I was glad to have both of them together and James was helpful with ladders, cameras and what not in working murals. I. S. Willard departed.



08211

11581

I. S. Willard departed at 4 and James at 4:30 and that was that. I did have one or two little matters I wanted to discuss with I. S. Willard regarding a point or two concerning some people whom she had brought here last year who, having fallen into some misadventures, want to consult with me for advice but I can take that up with her over the phone.

The Registers plan to move to Hatchitoches on or about February 1st. Kay doesn't know about the camp as yet and I believe James hopes to get it rigged up and in apple pie order before he unveils it for her delectation.

J. H. is in New Orleans but will return tonight. The plantation isn't doing much because of the cold and dampness. Fugabou who was on the wagon for a while, has fallen off again. Since the death of the Acre, Fugabou has been making coffee each morning before daylight and serving it at the store whenever the place opens. Both Fugabou and his wife, Maud, were pretty well into their cups yesterday. At about six in the evening, Maud roused up Fugabou, saying it was time for his coffee making and he responded with alacrity. Doreatha had but recently left the big house, following supper when Fugabou made a round to the kitchen, stirring up a fine pot of coffee and departing for the store with appropriate cups, saucers, spoons, sugar and so on. As the store wasn't open, --he sometimes does arrive there in the morning before anyone else, he sat down and waited. After a few minutes, somebody passing asking him what in the world he was doing there with his coffee tray and he explained it was almost time for the store to open. It was pointed out he was 11 or 12 hours ahead of time, whereupon everybody whooped and hollers in glee and the coffee tray went back to the big house and Fugabou back home to Maud and their cups.

May a restful weekend be unfolding  
for little Miss Lee in Lyme.....

11582

08211

Sunday, January 21st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and chill yesterday. Cloudy and warm today. A cold mass of air, heading south along the Rockies, stalled on the Dallas-Fort Worth line where it was sleeting last night with ice all over the area. Fortunately, a brisk breeze from the Gulf blew over this area, staying off the cold front and providing us with quite a mild spell.

I had quite a few in-coming calls from Saturday morning until nearly midnight. Carmen was the earliest bird, followed by Mrs. Walker's mother, Clara Genung and so throughout the day, ending up with a call from both of the Walkers who were at the Monteleon in New Orleans. It seems the morning papers had carried a list of the awards, set forth during the Press Association convention in the Crescent City and the reason for the calls was the fact that Cane River Memo received a citation. I believe the Enterprise received a citation, too, for its editor and I am glad for the paper that it got mentioned twice. I haven't seen the list of awards but one will be coming to hand shortly, I suppose, and, if so, I shall send same along.

I talked with Mrs. Walker first, after which her husband came on for a little chat and they seemed happy with the doings of the Association. I got a laugh out of something Mrs. Walker said and the way she said it which cannot be conveyed in type form. In a couple of sentences, she mentioned an episode that apparently had transpired at the dinner or, perhaps later in the hotel. "What made me laugh was not the episode itself but the fact that she threw in the final sentence on the subject without hesitating a second and without altering the tone of her voice in the slightest, spilling out the words as though a mechanical gadget were speaking. She said:

"Among others, I saw Carolyn and Ola Mae and when I spoke of your award, Carolyn said she had to rush right on and send you a wire of congratulations. Does she ever tell the

To keep the record straight, I shall let you know immediately when and if any wire comes through.



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One call during the day, having nothing to do with Cane River Memo, hailed from the artist who 'phoned around noon. She said Mr. Pipes and his wife had stopped by her house, en route to Baton Rouge, to pick up some paintings. She said Mr. Pipes told her they had rented a house in the "Pecan orchard" -- meaning Pecan Park, -- and they thought it would be nice if they could find a camp on the river, too. James hasn't told Kay as yet, I believe, that the Rand camp is already theirs.

I suppose they were in a hurry to get back to Baton Rouge before the weather got boisterous. In a way it seems odd they should have carried a flock of pictures back to Baton Rouge with them since they will be having to cart them back here again within a couple of weeks which is when they plan moving, I believe.

Across the fence this noon, I found mine hostess bubbling over with delight. Before I had taken off my jacket, she handed me a glass of wine and asked me to congratulate her on her good luck. She had taken several snapshots of the snow and ice a last week and all had come through except one. She was also merry because she was going with Dee to town this afternoon to indulge in bridge at Mez's house. Then, too, she is planning to have the entire inside of her own house done over and what's more, she is planning a party for twelve of her girl friends this summer, -- in plantation style. You can see easily enough how the lady's heart should be so glad some.

I'm beginning to dig into some of my Christmas mail and hope to acknowledge quite a lot of it during the week ahead. I believe it is Wednesday J. H. & Celeste go to New Orleans for the balance of the week. I'm still laughing every time I think of the guest speakers at the Cotton Council convention, -- Senator Goldwater of Arizona, Senator Eastland of Mississippi, indicating the planters are going to hear exactly the political flavor -- if one can hear a flavor, -- they already believe in most.....

11584

11584

Monday, January 22nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Mighty curious weather. It was so cloudy all afternoon the garden lights which work automatically night and morning, turning themselves on and off, found it so dark that they remained on full tilt all afternoon. This morning Austin, Texas, had a drop of temperature of 19 degrees in 17 minutes. It has been in the mid 70's here all day and this in contrast to Shreveport which was 38 most of the afternoon. Shreveport has had rain and sleet all day and we haven't had anything but clouds. I hope our thermometer doesn't sag to the 20 degree mark which Shreveport Weather Bureau says will be theirs. In the mean time, I have the doors and windows open but probably will have to be closing them before morning unless the cold front keeps on going east.

It was such a delightful surprise to find an envelope, registered, awaiting me at the post office this morning, the same stemming from Lyme. Twenty million ways of approaching the subject wouldn't be adequate for me to express half my delight with the whole business. A flock of interruptions, culminating in the supper bell, prevented me from doing more than exploring the first page, the two splendid portraits and glancing at the heading of the clipping. I shall have to exercise patience in mountainous amounts to curb my desire to run through the first page again and continue through the other two and then to absorb the clipping.

Somehow the portraits came most opportunely in conjunction with your advise regarding the failure of the lines at the bottom of the pages to track straight.



11585

11585

On the strength of your kindness all around,  
I dropped a line to the typewriter man who makes  
a round through this region every couple of weeks, asking  
him to lend me a machine while he takes w this one with him  
to give a thorough working over. It is so kind  
of you to set me straight in so many points and I  
must say it will be much easier for me when things are  
ship-shape once more. I am glad to know about  
the Denholme spaces at the top. I reckon I get in the  
habit of leaving space for the Yucca etching at the  
top, --I use so much of that stationary, and must  
incline toward leaving the same space on the plain sheets.  
I am so appreciative of all you t oughtful ess in this  
matter and the hundred and one others that you are forever  
so generously assisting me with as I move through  
the shadows.

I didn't even finish the first sentence of the clipping  
but realize that it is the obituary of Anna, duchesse de  
Tallyrand. The mere mention of her name recalls so  
vividly the last two times I saw her, an ocean between  
the places and the circumstances. The next to the last  
time she was receiving at the top of the grand  
staircase of her Grand "rianon house in Paris near the Arc,  
and the last time, she was in the New York Brentano, tucking  
a shawl around "papa" for the Duke was about played out apparant.  
but Anna was still going strong. She never got a  
very good press in America, probably for several  
reasons, two of which, perhaps, were because everybody  
thought her father, Jay Gold, a bag, which he certainly  
was, and secondly because I think many American reporters  
at the time of her marriage to Boni de Catellane and  
the divorce, had scant understanding of the adroit  
skill Anna moved in Continental circles. Everybody  
will probably forever compare Anna, duchess of  
Tallyrand, with Consuela, nee Vanderbilt, duchess of  
Marlborough. I never knew the latter but  
always felt she perhaps did not possess that sense of  
"grandesa" which Anna managed so wonderfully.. Anna  
could always play Proust's Guermantes but Consuela never seemed  
fitted for such a role.

Even as you, I also, I am sorry to say, have not  
communicated with Natalie since Christmas Eve or whenever  
she and R.B. were here. I forgot her birthday utterly.

11586

11586

Tuesday, January 23rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Chilly and drizzle all day long although  
the thermometer isn't scheduled to slip much below  
32 which is comforting. We are promised the  
same dish for the morrow.

It was so nice being ble to resume the  
letter from Lyme today. The formulation of plans for  
vacation time seems difficult enough all around. I gather our  
mutual friend did not subscribe to the idea expressed  
in the Cane River Memo about husbands  
and wives making the most of vacation opportunities, as  
applied to the family circle. But come to think of it,  
our mutual friend naturally never heard of Cane River Memo  
although the idea expressed therein may have come to  
her own mind. Naturally, I hold the thought for little Miss  
Lee's sake that her own outing may be so adjusted as  
to permit her to do at least a few things  
she wants to do. In view of the act that as one jogs  
along, one is likely to encounter interests that  
are as appealing as once were the personal connections and  
I hold the thought that visits to kin folks simply because  
they are kin folks and nothing else, may be kept at  
a minimum while opportunities to explore  
places which have grown apace with the years may  
somehow be squeezed in to a program and my guess is  
that these explorations will pay off dividends more handsomely  
in the wake of the visit than will a whole  
flock of energy expended on personalities that,  
for one reason or another, never did mean so much in  
a majority of cases as do these other points the individual  
himself as brought into the front row of consciousness  
by his own inclination.

I was interested in the clipping about



11587

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the death of the Duchesse de Talleyrand about which  
I had heard nothing. I didn't even know etc., etc.

I was so interested in the close-ups of the man who made  
"Your time is my time" and "raise the steins to dear old  
maine. The mention of the hotel on 58th between  
Madison and 5th makes me wonder if this is new, perhaps  
on the south side of the street sort of between  
or opposite the Madison or is it old and I have simply  
forgotten my Geography. Mention of  
the Mormon real estate plans adjoining Bergdoff-Goodman's  
is interesting. I like to keep up with such  
matters. I heard an interesting squib about  
the President of the concern making Rambler cars who  
is a Bishop in the Mormon Church and one whom the  
Republicans would like to polish off for Presidential  
material, it is said. I am glad Howard K. Smith is  
returning to the air. I shall try a few ABC stations in February  
to see if I can catch up with him via radio.

I must return to the Talleyrand-Lyndhurst matter.  
Here mention of Lyndhurst brought back so many  
memories of the place when Mrs. Finley J. Shepherd  
lived there. At the moment I think I ought to  
do a Cane River Memo touching on one or two such points but  
I reckon I could scarcely make it interesting enough to  
warrant.

The 'phone has been out of whack all day,  
perhaps since last night and I am accordingly  
enjoying the ante bellum quiet resulting therefrom.  
It is said the entire Cane River section of the Parish  
is without service which has probably  
annoyed many a subscriber but hasn't bothered me in  
the slightest.

The enclosures are of no particular interest but  
I enclose a few regardless I send the  
envelope from New Zealand, thinking you might not  
have seen a stamp from that quarter lately. I have  
acknowledged the card and do not want it back.....

11588

11588

Wednesday, January 24th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and sort of warmish in the 50's.

Just as I started to fold up my beard last night,  
a Baton Rouge call came through. It was  
from the Registers and I talked with each of them. They  
said they were busy packing for the Hachitoches move  
they anticipated during the coming week. They seemed to be  
bubbling over with gaiety. They both seemed filled  
with delight at the prospect of their impending place of  
residence. As I never understood the move from  
New Orleans to Baton Rouge, I suppose I  
should hope to understand the Baton Rouge to "Hachitoches"  
hejira. It's enough if they understand it or,  
failing that, if it is what they want to do. My mis-  
giving is that I doubt if they really know what  
they want and, because I think this is so, I  
envision an impulse on their part to be moving off  
in some other direction before their roots are well sunk  
into the local soil. I see no more  
virtue in "staying put" than following the pattern  
of the Mexican jumping bean but since  
I, myself, abhor the thought of playing out  
the role of a well heeled Nomad, the present plans puzzle  
me no end. If one's most arduous  
labor consists of clipping coupons and if  
one never actively interests one self in the life, --  
past, present or future, -- of a community where  
one chances to set up one's tent, moving on to  
some other site for tent pitching probably involves  
little or nothing except the inconvenience of  
directing expert movers where next to set up camp.

A lady's voice which I scarcely remembered came  
over the wire when I answered my 'phone this morning  
about 9. It was none other than



11589

Sister Frances Jerome. She is staying at the convent across the river and plans to remain there for several months. It seems she has a leave to do research and plans to make the local convent her headquarters for most of the time. She asked if she might make an appointment to see me and I suggested 9:30. She arrived with tape recorder swung over her arm and I gladly put a few things on to tape at her request. She remained until 11:30 and when I accompanied her to the gate, she pointed out a pretty car she was driving. She has always seemed so grateful for what little I could do to give her a hand in her Cane River explorations and she told me that she hoped I would call on her at any time if I wanted her to do any secretarial work for her and that if, at any time, I had occasion to go to Alexandria, Hatchiteches or any place, she would feel only too glad to drive me. It used to seem odd to see a single nun flying about up and down the local highways on foot and all by herself and it now seems even stranger to see a nun sailing off in any direction alone in a smart automobile equally all by herself.

I had chanced to be examining some swelling Chinese magnolia buds in the garden to the west of the big house when Sister Frances Jerome arrived. Ignoring her proffered hand of greeting, I simply threw my arms around her in a warm embrace. After dinner, as I was leaving the dining room, the cook, bubbling over with merriment, exclaimed:

"I shre was studyin' about Miss Carolyn this morning, wishin' she was here this morning when you done give that sister-lady that big hug....."

Come to think of it, I wish somebody had been there to make a snapshot for I think you would have found it hilarious, had there been one I might have been able to pass along. I reckon Father Callahan might have collapsed, had he been a witness to such carryings on.....

11590

Thursday, January 25th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Sunny with only a few flimsy clouds and pleasantly warmer in the mid 60's.

J. H. and Celeste are scheduled to leave by train tonight for New Orleans. At the coffee hour this morning, mine hostess read me a charming letter from Lyme. Over the tea or coffee cups, the lady expressed the wish she might skip all the Atlantic City doings and spend that time in Manhattan. She wants to taxi up to the Cloisters and would love to get in at least one show. She thought she wanted to see The Gay Life, --if that is the name of it, or, something with a title having Music in it but I forget the precise name. It was my understanding she was going to write little Miss Lee forthwith.

There were quite a few calls from town by people who learned about the Press Association awards for the first time when they read today's Enterprise. Several mentioned Mrs. Walker's column along side Cane River Memo. I ran through it hurriedly and it sounded very kind. I called her this evening to thank her for same.

Among those calling from town this morning was Clara Genung who certainly has a keen mind making her an entertaining conversationalist. She is always coining a phrase that sparkles. I may have mentioned one she used the other day which delighted me. In speaking of her daughter, she observed:

"Ursula is ~~an~~ intelligent alright but I'm just plain smart."

I like to repeat the phrase to myself, it somehow puts me in mind of the way, although differently couched, a local son or daughter of the soil may put it or something similar in the realm of fundamentals.



11591

11591

I heard something in a Chicago broadcast tonight that interested me, especially as I had never thought of the matter before. The speaker, remarking upon the fact that so many lakes and rivers in the central part of the country were under or supported a covering of ice at least a foot thick, it was imperative that people should remove the heavy blanket of snow covering the ice so that the fish beneath would not starve. According to this report, sunshine cannot penetrate the blanket of snow but if at least 15 percent of it is removed, that is all the snow removed from at least 15 percent of the ice, enough sunshine will penetrate through the ice, enabling the plant life to go on developing, thereby providing the fish with adequate food. Apparently there's enough oxygen in the water beneath the ice so that no holes need be cut to let in any extra. I had never thought of the matter at all but if I had, I shouldn't have imagined plants would do much in water under a ceiling of ice a foot thick.

Returning to today's conversation with Mrs. Genung, I was much interested when, in response to my reference to the Captain Eddie Rickenbacker speech and his desire to go back to 1912, she recalled she had known him quite well when he was just back from the 1st World War and that he had stopped with them at their home in the midwest and that he used to let little Ursula preen herself by wearing his fine medals. She said Eddie was alright until he married a rich widow-lady about whose money the boys were always ribbing him. From that point forward, Eddie seemed to feel it incumbent on himself to make lots and lots of money just to prove to the boys that he could amass more wealth than his wife. She said she thought Eddie was probably about at his youthful best in 1912, that she could understand his nostalgia for these "good old days" but that she doubted if he could ever make up the past couple of weeks, a faint and unpleasant aroma was again rising from the bamboo hedges. It comes from the droppings of a flock of birds currently hibernating here. My guess is there are not more than a few thousand, perhaps 10 or 15, which seems insignificant enough in contrast to the three million roosting nightly in the gardens during the 1950's. I hope we get no increase in numbers between now and the March migrations and that the rains may speedily wash away the reminder of the visitation. And so things turn locally while in Florida the rocketry boys begin preparations for their assault on the stars.....

11592

11592

Friday, January 26th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Rainy and around 60. The radio broadcast tornado warnings for this area from around noon until 8 o'clock tonight but none passed this way.

I did some transplanting ahead of the rain and I kept an eye on the tremendous black clouds unfolding in this direction from the north and west. About 1:30 or 2 it got so dark the automatic lights in the gardens turned themselves on and just as I finished the last plant, a soaking rain descended, saving me the trouble of having to water the things just put into the good earth. Within half an hour, the rain dwindled down to a drizzle, giving me an opportunity to finish off the job by dumping a wheelbarrow load of cotton hulls around the base of each plant and I held the thought that tonight each new tenant tonight finds himself comfortably housed.

Fugabou, Charles Turner and a couple of men I didn't know, living on the place, came to see me about first dark to ask if it would be alright if they bagged themselves some birds from the bamboo hedges tonight. Fortunately they concentrate on the bamboo hedges and not on the trees so nobody should be tempted to mistake a blackbird for a peacock or the other way around.

My birthday radio stood me in such good stead tonight when the standard one went out of whack. Last night the standard one seemed to develop arthrites or some such and the dial wouldn't turn. Fortunately it chanced to be on a station at the time and so I got the news from one source. I was told that someone at the store could fix it today and it was indeed fixed and



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returned to me in good order. When I tried to move from one station to another at 6:15 tonight, however, the dial moved with vast abandon, spinning around at a great rate, leaving the inner workings out of touch with all stations. You can imagine what a comfort it was being able to reach for my little birthday one and so round out news reception which covered such a large field this weekend, what with so many things popping in various quarters of the globe, not to mention the moon shot, preparations for tomorrow's space trip and so on.

I was delighted to hear Natalie's voice this morning when she called around 10:30. It was just a friendly chitchat with no particular news exchanged by either side. She hadn't heard the Registers were moving to town. She said she was making a dress for Ann and making, at the same time, some kind of food for thirty people which she is carrying to Minden or some such place on the morrow where her mother's people are having a family reunion. She asked if I had heard anything by way of a peep out of L. S. U. Press and I told her I had not and she reported no peeps from that quarter either. The old semestre is ending and the new beginning and there seems to be lots of college work demanding her time, not to mention preparation for a closed circuit TV program on which she is going to teach some subject or other. I can only wonder at the tremendous amount of energy she is bound to possess in being able to manage so many irons in the fire.

In view of all the fanfare swirling around the proposed man in orbit business, together with details about the thing costing four hundred million dollars, I ask myself, as I have inquired at the same point before, if we aren't handling our publicity all wrong in such matters. We have built up the public standing on its tiptoes, only to let them down with a crash when a project has failed and I think the effect is good for nobody, especially for non-rocketry nations on our side who must experience as much disappointment over delays as do we while providing much counter-propaganda material gratis to the Soviet. Since I am incapable intellectually of handling such matters, I might do better to keep my scientific experiments where or not....

11594

Sunday, January 28th, 1962.

Memorandum:

All blue and gold and 60-ish.

It was such a pleasant surprise to discover a letter from Lyne in yesterday's post. I relished the communion it afforded and after having experienced once in the early afternoon, I repeated it in the early evening.

Thanks to the telling pen strokes of the present changes effected in the metropolitan area, I am convinced I should scarcely recognize the place, were I to find myself transported there. As for Washington Square Village, I find it an interesting coincidence that little Miss Lee should also be acquainted with residents in that area. I take it to be situated directly south of the Square itself, --a region that was never very clear in my mind for, although I have on occasion walked through the locality, it was all so drab and seemingly so much of one piece that I never found very much there to call me back. I remember the Judson Memorial Church facing the Square on the south and I gather the Village stretches south from that line of buildings in front of which every spring there used to be sidewalk Art exhibitions and so on. Should little Miss Lee chance to bump into No. 4 and discover Bob or his wife, I think she might find them pleasant conversationalists but for a person with so many demands on her time, I can readily understand if she doesn't get around to going over the entire development.

I was interested in learning several news items from The Enterprise, as mentioned in little Miss Lee's letter. That La Spinks should have written the Enterprise about the absence of the column isn't surprising but it does seem odd nobody mentioned the fact. Probably the rush of holidays precluded reference to such casual particulars.



11595

I must say I am thankful for a quiet day and the absence of visitors is a little surprising, what with the weather so pretty. It is true I had a half dozen people by appointment this morning, -- guests of Mrs. Peter Cloutier. They were pleasant enough and as I did not ask them to sit down, their stay wasn't too long. I had rather expected Blythe might make a round but I didn't see anyone this afternoon except a few of the plantation folks who usually drop in for a short howdy on Sundays.

I listened to Invitation to Learning tonight, -- revolving around the poetry of Keats but I must confess that while I enjoyed listening, I didn't get much out of it. Somehow they seemed to start off by getting tangles up in that line from the Ode to a Grecian Urn:

"Truth is beauty and beauty truth."

and while they finally got themselves unhooked from that, they never did get on to anything of much consequence. One of the guests was Sir Fitzroy McClean, member of Parlemtent, who ever Sir Fitzroy may be. He struck me as being a person I should like to spend long hours with, not on a microphone but rather on a comfortable deep sofa in front of a blazing log fire where there would be no need to keep one's eye on the clock or hurry about completing sentences.

The primary in New Orleans had half a dozen candidates of whom the two top vote getters will run in a second primary in about a month. One of the top men is the present Mayor whose name I know not, something like Giro or Skiro or some such whom I'm told is pleasant but who strikes me as being an unimaginative politician. The other top man is a State Legislator with a name that sounds like Duplantier or du Plantier or some such. He opposed the Citizens Council bigots and has been contending against the Davis dominated Baton Rouge crowd which recommends him to me. Duplantier received more votes than any other single candidate and is said to have scored heavily in votes with heavy negro population. When all the votes rounded up by the other four candidates eliminated, however, it is anybody's guess how the second primary will pan out. What I am sure of is that the primary was a success and that it was a success that made this weekend the happier.....

561

Monday, January 29th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair with a frost this morning, dazzling sunshine all day and cloudless and cool tonight.

Joe and Dan were here for dinner, Joe to pick up

men to take them to town to work on his grass plot for him, Dan to see about having somebody dig him nandinas tomorrow morning for afternoon planting on his plot in Pecque Park.

Sister and Dootsie, her daughter, blew in around 4. Sister reported Dan very ill, so ill, in fact, that when he got home from dinner down here, he couldn't pause to chat but had to go right to bed. She and Dootsie walked from Dan's to Joe's place where Joe was working his men from here. He did not suspect his labors and did not invite them to inspect his new house. Then they walked over to Pat's but didn't see the new baby. I understood Sister to say she wouldn't go inside the house anyway but, if not, why she walked over there, I wouldn't know. Sister and Dootsie are here tonight although they claim they are going home on the morrow.

I heard nothing about Senator' Goldwater's speech to the Cotton Council this afternoon on any of the evening news reports out of ew Orleans. I conclude from that he delivered nothing of earth-shaking proportions to the assembled cotton folks. I assume Senator Eastland will not get any more space on the morrow, following his speech, than Goldwater did following his. But I haven't a doubt all present enjoyed today's speech since the vast majority of the audience; I haven't a doubt, are as conservative as the speaker. I assume most conventioners don't want to hear ideas but merely listen to an echo of their own thinking and surely that's what the Council is probably getting.



11597

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Natalie called this morning and we had quite a pleasant chat. She reported her trip to Minden on Saturday very pleasant and plans returning to the General area again shortly to do a book review for some club. She reported finding an interesting article in the current Harpers having to do with a notebook kept by Graham Green while he was doing one of his recent novels. Natalie is an ardent admirer of Mr. Green, none of whose books I have ever read but understand are excellent in the fictional field.

Carmen called to say some organization, perhaps the Hysterical Ladies, are entertaining a hundred officers wives from Fort Polk next week or sometime and wondered if she might bring them down here. My response was negative. She is going to take them to Oakland anyway and that will be enough for the wives of the officers.

About 99 of them, if they follow the usual pattern, wouldn't have much interest in what the plantations have to offer, if they follow the pattern of most groups of officers wives I have met in such mass gatherings. Although it would be extra work for me, were they to be invited here, still I shouldn't mind having them if there weren't too many unpredictables of the family forever blowing in and out.

Mrs. Walker called to say Howdy and to report The Enterprise has just received photos,-- Essae Mae and Sally, --separate pictures, with a news release, stating that Essae Mae is retiring in July, to be succeeded by Sally. The biographical data covering Essae Mae covered something like 14 pages while Sally's covered something like five. I shall not hasten to congratulate Sally before the succession has actually be completed which will be seen enough. Essae Mae seems to have been on the point of retiring so often.

Dull memo, dull me. May I do better on the morrow in more peace....

11598

11598

Tuesday, January 30th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and mild.

The radio talks about clouds likely to put off the Florida launching of the space ship again but surely the weather in that area must be anticipated from some other quarter than here.

Sister and Dootsie, her daughter, returned to Shreveport this afternoon. Dootsie, having no manners, opened my door without knocking this morning when I was on the phone. I cut short the conversation on the wire and listened to her. She said she thought it would be nice if Melrose were opened to the public and that her mama who wants a job were put in charge. Her mama told the cook she was curious to know who was going to have the Band camp as she would like to get a job taking care of it. Off hand, I shouldn't imagine there would be any openings for her in either place.

Sam Brown spent the morning planting or rather digging nandinas and Dan picked him and nandinas up at noon and carried them off to town to get them set out on his Pecane Park property. Sister, in one breath, told me that Dan is very sick, has too small a house which he is going to sell and build himself a bigger one in Pecane Park..

I had Juggaou helping me most of the day, cleaning up the hana garden, getting it ready for the ploughs, hauling out stalks of last year's ribbon grass, cutting bamboo poles for re-furbishing the gourd garden and such like. I relished the exercise it provided for me and it is a pleasant tiredness I feel tonight, physical exhaustion but spiritual peace that always follows in the wake of visitations by the Shreveport contingent.



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There was some reference on a Farm program this morning at 5:30 to the Goldwater speech before the Cotton Council yesterday in which the Senator modestly stated he had no expectation of being a Republican candidate for President, come 1964. His present public appearances in various quarters of the country, while the Senate is sitting suggests that if he doesn't anticipate higher political favor, he is certainly expending a heap of energy at many Republican gatherings. Nothing was mentioned in any New Orleans tonight that I heard that in any way mentioned Senator Eastland's speech today. Perhaps I shall find reference to it in tomorrow's Farm program.

I assume J. H. will probably be returning home tonight and perhaps Celeste will follow on the morrow. I suppose J. H. will fly back and Celeste motor with the J. H. Williamses.

I noticed the supper table was laid for six tonight and the cook mentioned that Dan Henry and two daughters would join the clerk, the peacane man named Crow and me. But more places had to be added as Dan brought all three daughters, his wife and her son to host.

I have had quite a few calls from people who thanked me for having run Lyle's letter about Children of Strangers in a recent Cane River memo. Mrs. Walker phoned me this morning to read me one or two letters on the same subject from people asking for extra copies of the issue containing that letter. I am glad so many readers found it to their liking and as extra copies are requested, I take it some people are going to add it to other titles from the Saxon pen.

I haven't been writing the Registers, being uncertain as to the date they plan to move and I, in turn, haven't heard from them. Perhaps they will telephone from Baton Rouge or from town. I. S. Willard doesn't seem to be at home, cutting off that source regarding Baton Rouge plans. I am sure they all will be in and about quite soon and my activities will be stepping up accordingly.....

11600

11600

Wednesday, January 31st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and mild.

You were so kind as to offer to keep an eye open for Saxon items, should you encounter any on the second hand mart. I have neglected to thank you for your thoughtfulness but I trust you will believe me when I say that failure to mention it until now in no way should indicate any lack of appreciation on my part. I am in no need of anything from the list of his works but I should appreciate it if you would keep two titles in the back of your mind in case you should encounter either at some ridiculous figure, --

Friends of Joe Gilmore

Old Louisiana.

At the time B. Altman offered the Gilmore item for a dollar a throw, I wrote Hastings House, thinking they might have some extra copies but they were all out. Once in a while somebody asks me about this volume but I don't find a copy to hand. Because it has Yucca pictures in it, people who like the place sometimes inquire about the book. If it can be picked up for less than a dollar, it might be worth watching for. I reckon Old Louisiana could never been discovered at such a favorable figure, for I suppose it currently lists at around \$7.50 but if it should be encountered at some quaint price, it might be worth picking up. The new edition of Children of Strangers, as published by Basement Book Shop, -- Jess Craig, sells at \$4.10 but perhaps an earlier printing, possibly by Houghton-Mifflin, might be picked up at some ridiculously low figure if somebody, buying a library for other items, should, as sometimes happens, throw everything else on to the market at some nominal price. I pray you not to search for any of these, however, but merely keep them in mind in case you should find yourself in a bargain.....



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Although J. H. and Celeste returned from New Orleans this afternoon, I haven't had my report from the latter as I shall not see her until coffee on the morrow.

I did see J. H. at supper, however, and was surprised when, for the first time in my life, I heard him say he was tired, tired of all the work he had been through during the past several days in the Crescent City. Actually, he was probably tired, too, from his trip back here, --by car, I suppose, plus the fact that on his arrival, he had transacted some business and then rushed off to town for an appointment.

The thing he had to relate about impressions of the Cotton Council convention were as unexpected as his statement that he was exhausted. He, who is a firm Republican, reported that the President is turning very Conservative which is just another way of saying the President's viewpoint is likely to come closer to jiving with his own. He said Senator Eastland never showed up because of the impending Presidential Farm Message. As the Presidential Farm Message wasn't scheduled for delivery until today and as Senator Goldwater had been able to appear on Monday and get back by today, it would have seemed the Mississippi Senator might have put in his presence at the Crescent City and still be back on the Potomac by this afternoon, if he had cared to.

J. H. said that everyone agreed that very difficult economic days stretched ahead.

There was much talk, too, about an endowment of a hundred million dollars, I assume by business or private sources, for Vanderbilt University students "so that institution can supply top people for future Administrations even as Harvard now serves the present Government". I shall have to unravel some of these reports and report on them further. Tomorrow's report on the social side of the city will present another aspect on things here. . . . .

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11602

Thurs.  
Friday, February 1st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and mild. "The Weather Bureau predicts the old ground hog is going to see his shadow on the morrow and so I am readily convinced it will be March 21st really arrives but if the present temperatures in the 70's continue, I don't care when winter ends.

I was perfectly enchanted today when I found a pres nt awaiting me at the post office. The mail is always late on the 1st of the month because the postman has to stop at every house on his route to leave a welfare check and thus he reaches here later than on other days. But there wasn't any 1st class mail to speak of anyway and the single package was worth more than a stack of 1st class mail.

I haven't had an opportunity to read the smaller print on the cardboard carton but I could make out the large letters plainly enough, --Swann In Love. I was delighted. I do not know as yet the identity of the reader but I have listened to him and find his English rendition marvelous.

There were people in and out all day and I had field hands to guide at gardening projects and there were callers and more callers. Yet, in spite of such doings, I was able to read both pages of the first record and, as soon as I have cleared my desk of "must stuff" tonight, I propose collapsing in my armchair and just concentrating on both records so that I may relish the whole business from beginning to end and then all over again. How can I hope to express my pleasure over this new treasure. I have so often wanted to read a little from little Marcel's pen but the time required to get an entire volume out of Baton Rouge



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is such that I have forgone the impulse until I should have an opportunity to pursue the whole volume and I don't get a round to do that more than about once a year. But, now, thanks to this gift, I shall be able to turn to little "arcel" any time I feel like it, which will be often enough. As a matter of fact, I feel rather noble right now that I am not concentrating on that department instead of sticking to this machine.

Among those passing this way today were Blythe and her sister-in-law, Annie White. They both seemed in a happy frame of mind and had many adventures to relate about the January freeze in Alexandria. It seems that all the palms in that cit were "cooked". I think we fared better up this way. We may have lost one or two but the majority of them here survived, I believe.

Blythe wanted to know when I would take a day off and run up to spend a day at Briarwood. I suggested we wait until there were more flowers and a little less dampness under foot. Blythe agreed it might be an adventure in various ways of getting stuck in the mud at the moment once we had turned from the public road into the "Briarpatch". I haven't a doubt the Registers will be wanting me to make the identical trip before long, too, and so I shall probably end up by making at least three trips in that direction before summer since Celeste, too, has asked me to go with her one day.

I saw Celeste at the coffee hour. She said the whole convention in New Orleans was wonderful, darling receptions and "even knows what all. There was considerable detail as to the darling costume Mrs. So-and-so wore at this cocktail party and what Mrs. Thosit wore at that dinner and so on. A visit to Farley's Nursery was drummed up by Celeste and a couple of girl friends and Beth Beaufort was distressed when, later, she learned they had been to the place and she hadn't. Charles and Ida Mazurette were visited for tea and Charles was found to be looking more pert than Ida which is usually the other way around.

Beth is taking her husband to Las Vegas, "for a rest", she says, and on the 23rd of March she is going to Tokyo. What a bag....

11604

11604

Fr day, February 2nd, 1962.

Memorandum: ...

Fair and mild. Today the radio mentioned heavy fogs that have characterized weather along the west coast of late. We have had them here, too, and it is after 9 some mornings before the sun has been able to burn them out.

Sister Frances Jerome came to see me this afternoon. She 'phoned for an appointment and we established contact at 1. I like her very much and was happy to be able to do what I could to clarify some local social points for her.

While she was here, I had a call from James, saying he and Kay were in town and suggested it would be nice breaking bread together tonight.

Around 3, Carmen and Roberta Rue blew in unannounced. They had been to Alexandria to a Red Cross meeting and reported having considerable difficulty negotiating the road when they journeyed down yonder, the 2 hour journey covering 40 some odd miles from "atchitoches" being impeded by the heavy fog, as between 8 and 10.

I was glad they came while S. F. J. was here, for the latter and Carmen had never met and I think Carmen may well be able to help her in some of her inquiries as to ante bellum town folk, the identifying of their residences and so on.

James appeared at 6 and he accepted my invitation for a glass of wine before leaving. He ran hurriedly over a few points transpiring or about to transpire, such as Mrs. Walker 'phoning yesterday to volunteer an excellent house servant if they should be in search of same, a domestic formerly in the employ of the late Mrs. Williams, etc., etc.

In about 10 minutes J. H. arrived to say Kay had asked him to punch us along. I hadn't realized she had come down with James.



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James spoke to J. H., as to the name of the bank of which he is a director. James will confer with somebody there on the morrow.

"He tried to dine at the Town House but found it bubbling over with customers and so he went on to the hotel for a dab of shrimp.

The registers are staying at the motel and the furniture is already in their Pecane Park rent house. James made plans of the house and gave them to the moving people. The men assigned to the job were Sam Shepherd and Will., both colored. James was enchanted with both as they were expert in their job and they were apparently enchanted with James who had thing so designated as to indicate where in which room each piece of furniture should go. It is all in the house but James won't let Kay enter until all the things are unpacked and everything is ship-shape. Moving for Kay constitutes going from Baton Rouge to the motel in Natchitoches and then, when the house is all settled, move from the motel to the house and I have no doubt she realizes most ladies don't get such a break when it comes to establishing a new residence.

There seems to be only one fly in the ointment, -- the fact that there are odds and ends for which there is no space in the Pecane Park house and James would like to put them in the ex-Rand camp. The Rand lease, I learned today, ran out at Christmas time, but nothing has been done as yet about removing their things from the camp which is certainly remiss on the part of the "ands. Naturally James can't put his plunder in the camp before the Rand things have been removed and there stands that Gordian knot. I reckon if I tell J. H. he will ask the Rands to make way for the new-comers but, somehow, it seems as though that shouldn't be necessary.

And so things turn and Kay tells me I. S. Willard will take her to an Hysterical Ladies luncheon at the Country Club and Thelma Kyser, calling me tonight to congratulate me on the L. P. A. award, says she will make it a point to greet Kay when the 174 ladies break bread on the morrow.....

10311

11606

Sunday, February 4th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and mild. I hope the magnolia blossoms don't advance too rapidly for another freeze is said to be just in the offing.

The weekend has been a quiet one. I had only a few visitors including Father Calahan and Father McElroy who drove over from the church across the way to spend a pleasant hour over a glass of port this afternoon.

While they were here, I had a call from James from whom I had not heard yesterday. He said he and Kay thought they might drive down in time to get back before the fog settled down. I told him I had already accepted an invitation to join J. H. and Celeste who were having a guest or two for supper and so they decided they would come tomorrow instead. James said he had been pretty busy yesterday but had got along nicely. I suppose they will be moving into the rent house from the motel within a day or so.

My agents report much moving at the Rand camp under the direction of Blythe's son, Horace whom I believe to be the prime force in getting Blythe to give up the camp. He had offered James a camp bed or two and a table, along with some other odds and ends in the camp, pots, dishes and so on for a thousand dollars which James thought an outrageously high figure. When James declined, Horace gave most of the stuff to Zelma and had her call the gas company to come and remove the fuel from



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the tank. Of course the fuel belonged to the hands but it seems odd they didn't ask James if he wanted it instead of having it removed, necessitating the gas company to return to re-fill it again for James. A slight wrinkle is developing in the case of Zelma who lives to the west of the camp and Doreatha who lives at the east of it. J. H., who had no right to do so, advised Zelma, whom he heard was moving to town, to remain to work for James. James, in the mean time, had decided that Doreatha and her husband and her daughter would be of greater assistance in general operations, especially as Zelma has a flock of children staying with her whom she always brings to the camp when helping Blythe. Doreatha and Ezra, her husband, are to be desired since Ezra could keep the lawn in order, attend to the water pump, serve as electrician and so on and their daughter could give a hand at keeping the camp house in order. Well, we shall see what we shall see.

On the 'phone this afternoon, James reported that Kay had had a fine time at the Country Club luncheon with 160 or 170 hysterical ladies. Several of the latter called me Saturday night and this morning to report how nicely things had gone and how smart I. S. Willard had appeared and how much everyone seemed to like Kay. I'm glad it turned out thus. During the talking part of the luncheon, it fell to Carmen to salute various members of the organization who had contributed of time and labor to the advancement of the organization during the year and it seemed pointed that she omitted any reference to Mrs. Walker whom Carmen can't stand. When Carmen had resumed her seat, Thelma arose and, as President, said she wanted to speak with particular emphasis on the splendid work done both in the club and in the Enterprise which Mrs. Walker had done.

Among these speaking members, Natalie who seemed to enjoy yesterday's luncheon. She and I were both enchanted that Sudie Laughton, who had been nominated for membership of the Board, was not elected. Natalie says Sudie is much more bigoted about no end of things than I could imagine and my imagination in that direction is pretty active, following Sudie's example. The autographing party episode a few years back.

11608

11608

Monday, February 5th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and chill.

It was such an unexpected plaisir to discover a tresser from Lyme in today's post, the letter of Wednesday giving me so many interesting glimpses of places, people and little Miss Lee.

I can well picture the impulses that must be astir regarding how time shall be spent during the summer interlude. I was hoping that perhaps something might be arranged so little Miss Lee and the girl friend might make a sortie to you know where. But after learning of the girl friend's plans, I realized that side trip would probably not be possible. One of the disadvantages of passports is so evident in all this.

It is nice knowing that A. and M. will be having a little outing on the same continent that others are planning. If only they were going to be in the neighborhood toward which a sortie might be planned, one might use such an unlikely peg on which to hang a hat but the time element doesn't even coincide. Misere.

It was so kind of you to mention the L. P. A. award and I shall always treasure what you had to say about it. As for the memo department or more precisely the memorandum department during the summer, I have given some thought to it and am delighted you mentioned it. I need scarcely tell you with what pleasure I look forward to the end of each day to the opportunity it provides for a little communion with La Lee and if she has no objection, I shall continue that custom during the interlude.



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attempting to jot down, either at the top of each page, or on a separate sheet, the salient events that may transpire during that period so that little Miss Lee may glance at the brief notation to see if anything of interest has transpired, and thus be able to skip all the plethora of notations if circumstances prevent reading the whole bunch of stuff at a time when, at the conclusion of the interlude, there will be so many things demanding her attention. If she would prefer to have merely a weekly summation instead of a daily memorandum, that will be alright, too, of course. Just which ever way seems best will be just fine for Lestan although the little chats at close of each day along usual patterns, will probably give a more complete, albeit a duller panorama.

In answer to the inquiry regarding the Yucca letter heads, I would report that one box has been completely used up and the other about half exhausted. I was thinking about slowing up in its use, saving it for ultra special occasions only. If, for any one of a dozen reasons, it is felt it would be more satisfactory to replenish the supply later in the year, I can put the current stock on the holding shelf for a while and thus bridge the gap in this special item until the accustomed routine is once more in full swing.

I so much appreciate the information about various landmarks in Gotham. I remember the Sherry-Netherlands so well and the little old Regal Shoe sign, three blocks to the west where the new Art building is scheduled to emerge eventually. I am so glad to be able to follow these particulars and thus repair the skyline of my own mind in closer conformity to contemporary realities which, of course, are forever changing from one season to another.

What goes on in the Register camp, I know not. I haven't heard from them today. The artist tonight phoned to say she had seen them on Sunday evening, indicating they were down this way when I was across the fence. I reckon they are probably getting things shaken down into place in the new residence where, it is said, a phone will be installed on the morrow.

I hope your winter doesn't last long.....

11610

11611

Tuesday, February 6th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and chilly. The thermometer dropped below freezing last night but nowhere near the 12 degree mark reported last midweek from Lyme. It will go down into the 20's again tonight and then start warming on the morrow, I hope.

Sometime between now and the morrow, I must knock off a column. Since I haven't an idea on what to expiate on, I may turn to the loss of a friend whose corpse I found between the front gate and the first Chinese magnolia this morning, --good old Louella. Louella and Low Paul have never let more than a distance of three feet separate them in all their daily travels and so I was alarmed last night when Low Paul came home without Louella and I realized, of course, that something untoward had transpired. This morning I made a tour of the gardens, thinking I might discover some tell-tale white feathers, suspecting a canine marauder of a crime. But I was wrong in that assumption for a careful examination of the body revealed no signs of violence. I take it that Louella had simply had a stroke or some such. And so I arranged a prompt funeral before letting out Low Paul and the ducks for their morning walk. All morning Low Paul had kept issuing plaintive calls for his companion but, of course, without avail, and I thought it kinder on my part and easier for Low Paul if he didn't have to go through the rigors of last rites. As soon as the grave had been closed, I immediately ..... interruption..... and I know not at what point I was pursuing my tale about Louella and so I shall drop her right there.

The interruption was a phone call from James. I hadn't heard from that quarter since Sunday. He



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reports progress in getting the house to rights.

The Register new 'phone number is  
Natchitoches 4478, that is four four seven eight.

Kay and he will remain at the motel for  
a day or two longer. She was within hearing distance and so I  
asked few questions about her good health but he volunteered that

she is a little tired, her hip giving her some  
pain during the past couple of nights. I  
suspect they are studying about inviting me to dinner in  
this week and by then I trust she will have rested a  
little, although I believe she has been doing much of that  
-- since, as I understand it, she hasn't been to the new  
house as yet.

interruption.....

Juanita B. just 'phoned. She had  
called me this morning to thank me for a hospital  
remembrance but the line was out and so she  
called again tonight. She said Pat and  
the Presbyterian minister had gone to a basket ball  
game and she thought the time excellent to resume where  
we had left off this morning. She says she and the new  
baby are doing just fine and that she is going to make a  
round down this way one of these days.

At the coffee hour this morning I listened to a lot  
of tentative plans for travels and parties and whatnot. There  
is still much chatter about the lady and me driving down to  
New Iberia in the Spring and I had better begin  
getting busy to see if I can sidetrack that thought before  
it takes too solid root. I should like to  
think the Atlantic City jaunt ought to suffice to  
satisfy road running but such jaunts merely whet the  
appetite, I suppose. Smile.....

11612

Wednesday, February 7th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and reasonably mild.

At the coffee hour, I learned mine hostess had forwarded  
you an air mail letter on Tuesday. In it she and J. H. would be in town and I had  
have you secure three tickets for the night. I sure this would  
might go with them as their guest. I sure this would  
afford them much pleasure but if you, yourself, find  
that the date conflicts with any plans you may have or in  
any way inconveniences you, you will, I know,  
feel perfectly free about declining.

I had to laugh this afternoon when three of my friends who  
were lending me a hand in the garden observed that  
Louella was looking mighty pert. I had  
thought I had buried Louella and had followed up her last  
rites by writing a Cane River Memo mentioning  
her departure. I took a second look at the goose  
and still thought it was Lou Paul. Two more friends  
appeared and I asked them if the bird might be a goose  
or a gander. One thought it the former, the  
other the latter. And so I don't know as of the  
present writing whether in fact I buried the one  
or the other and recorded the doings in the column.  
If it turns out I was wrong, I shall simply charge  
off the whole thing to poetic license or some such. It  
is curious, indeed, that in the case of the  
ducks and the geese, it is sometimes almost  
impossible to determine their sex for the tell-tail  
features, especially the tail part, varies in  
appearance from time to time and while the males  
at some times have quite a twist in the tail section, at  
other times there is no curl at all. I had thought  
that the crown on the geese was larger in  
the male than the female but the size of  
that top-knot seems to vary in expansion and contraction  
and so, as of now, I am still quite in the dark as to  
which of my little friends I buried and which is  
still going strong.



11611

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Now that it is February, I am hoping the typewriter service may be passing this way shortly to pick up this machine to put it in order again. For a couple of days now, it has been kicking up at the side, resulting in the tears as already evidenced on this sheet. A new roller, however, will avoid such business, I believe, and it will be just grand sitting down to a machine that doesn't threaten every minute or two about chewing up the paper.

Carmen called today with her usual fund of chit-chat. She mentioned her niece's husband who does something in film manufacturing has been in San Francisco recently where preparations are going forward in turning out an Albert Hitchcock picture about birds. Whether this has to do with the migrations or what, I don't know but from what Carmen reported, it sounds as though the work is somewhat elaborate and perhaps the picture will be interesting. I shall give you more particulars when I hear more.

I am holding the thought that the last wintry blast of freezing accoutrements may have passed for the Chinese magnolias are all beginning to put out lovely blossoms at the very tops of the trees and as the warm weather continues, the spread of color will move downward as the blossoms continue unfolding. The new ones recently set out at Ghana seem to be unfolding some tiny green leaves and the bushes of Chinese honeysuckle are already receiving visitations from bees who are certainly losing no time getting the stores of honey replenished. I shall leave the envelope of this letter open and, in the morning, shall tuck in a stem from the Chinese honeysuckle. I hope the perfume doesn't evaporate before reaching you for I should like to share its pungent aroma with you. It reminds me a little of camphor or some such, more spicy than sweet, but withall quite pleasant, it seems to me.

I am going to read a little tonight before folding. I have run through Swan In Love every night since its arrival and have enjoyed it no end, blessing little Misses the titles for times provided me with so

11611

11614

Thursday, February 8th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and warm, in face of the prediction of rain. Threepert got it but we escaped.

The job of trimming the crepe myrtles is about finished for which I am thankful. The Ghana garden was disked today and with the surface of that garden well churned up and another repeat performance in two or three weeks, I can begin to consider what will be planted there before long.

One of these days I shall have to give some attention to the pavement of the front gallery of Yucca. I thought the armadillo population had moved somewhere else but the other day I discovered they had tunneled across the space under the bricks which caved in under my step and a day or two ago I found another tunnel that runs right under one of the big armchairs. I shall have to take up the brick, fill in the tunnels and replace the bricks. At before undertaking that chore, I must find some place where I can persuade a couple of beauties to transfer their operations of hatching out two or three dozen eggs on which they are currently parked atop the aforesaid armchair. And getting them satisfied will represent one undertaking less arduous physically but even more socially, and I with the armadillo population would all die but not under this house.

I guess it was last week's Enterprise that carried an account, --perhaps it was this week's, of a couple of Cloutierville residents, a gentleman named McCoy and a lady named Rachel, being sent to prison on a three year stretch because they had broken a probation order hanging over their heads denying them the right to live together. I don't know either of them but I know some of Mrs. Rachels' relatives and while they all accept it as patent that they have colored blood, all of the Rachels I know are fully as white in appearance, if not more so, than all the white people I know. There is no doubt in my mind that if anybody had the money to take the case to



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a higher Court, the case would be thrown out since obviously the Constitution has no provision denying Americans from marrying each other if they so desire. Mrs. Rachel's son by an earlier marriage, living in California, was called upon by his mother to take care of her two or three small children while she is in prison. The youth came from Los Angeles and, on his arrival, was killed in an automobile wreck right in the heart of Clontierville, if, indeed, that place may be said to have such a thing. Now Mrs. Rachel has been permitted to remain in Clontierville until this weekend in order she may attend the funeral of her son before she departs for Angola. Who takes over the care of her small children during her three year

stretch, I know not. It all sounds pretty grim and somehow one cannot resist to take a second look at the calendar to see if, indeed, this is the enlightened year of grace, one thousand nine hundred sixty two. The artist called me this afternoon to say she had some pretty pictures she had been working on and thought I might enjoy seeing. I dropped by her house for a few minutes and found one I thought I might be able to dispose of readily. I nearly fell right when, in response to my inquiry as to what she wanted for it, she quoted a figure 150 percent below anything she has asked during the past several years and this in face of the fact that she is getting higher prices and is piled up with more work than she can keep ahead of, -- James, Sister, Dr. Talley and a flock of people who are merely names to me. I thought, in fact, I am quite sure the artist was cold sober and I am amazed at this strange performance, so out of line with her accustomed pattern.

The enclosures are of no particular interest except the reference in the Crockett one regarding current prices of Saxon books. I hadn't known before

that the Saxon books were so cheap. I had always thought they were expensive. I had seen them in the store and they were always in the window. I had seen them in the store and they were always in the window. I had seen them in the store and they were always in the window.

11616

11611

Friday, February 9th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Sunny and warm. Snowy pear blossoms began unfolding and by noon most of the

Chinese magnolias were a-drip with color half way down from their crown.

At coffee I learned Sister had telephoned last night to say she wanted to have some dental work done and thought it would be nice to stay here while that was being done. She dramatically announced that after John had disappeared for two weeks, he had turned up at Madison, Wisconsin where he had matriculated in the University there. Any statement from that quarter has to be loaded with excitement and I recall Dootsie mentioned at table when here a couple of weeks back that John was planning to attend another university.

Around 10:30 this morning, I noticed four ladies coming through the front gate. They turned out to be St. Francisville numbers, including a daughter of the Frank Percy's tribe of Greenwood. They were going to Natchitoches for luncheon and had stopped off here because they wanted to stop off here. They were very pleasant but I had little time to devote to them but they seemed to enjoy themselves. They said the Houston, Texas, Underwoods were doing a magnificent job at restoring Rosedown. They said the pillars are still standing at Greenwood and that was about all I learned from them although, had I not been preoccupied for time, I might have learned a few things about other points of interest.

James called around 2. He said they had moved into the house and suggested I come up to see the place. I don't know why I didn't want to spend an evening there but I didn't and explained, when he said he would be down about 4 to pick me up that I wished he would make it either earlier or later as I had a six o'clock appointment which I did not. He said



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he would make it by 3:30 and get me back by 6. I accordingly jumped into some work directing helpers in the tree trimming business, covering the hours I would be away, and then yanked off my whiskers and crawled into a tub with a view to donning some fresh raiment. But just as the soap suds were getting into the billowing state, my phone rang and it was James, saying he had had to change his plans and come down earlier. I said that was fine and he got here about 3:45 and remained for an hour. The Rands, according to the store, had had the lights at the camp cut off and so James went to the store and asked the clerk to have them turned on again, this time in his name. He called me about 7 tonight to say he had gone by the camp and found it open, of course, as the Rands had not left the key to the door.

He said he wasn't sure about having the lights turned on since he noticed inside that when the Rands had removed the electric fans, they had left the wires dangling and exposed and that for avoiding a fire, it might be better to have an electrician check on them before turning on the light current, requesting me to advise the clerk accordingly so that the R. E. A. lineman might be stayed off until an electrician could examine the state of things. It certainly seems odd that on leaving the camp, Horace Rand or whoever was the last person there didn't drop by the store and leave a key.

Kay and I. S. Willard go to the movies tomorrow afternoon. Something was said about me coming to town but I begged off, suggesting Kay and James pass this way on Sunday afternoon to see the magnolias, hinting that I might be persuaded to return to town with them afterward. I am sure the normal thing would be for me to want to go to town to see their new rent house but I am definitely on the sub-normal side but I reckon it's going to be difficult to convey the thought that I prefer "staying put".

Today I discovered two banties, making use of the fine house Emmett and Erwin disdain, had jointed deposited 36 eggs within but how which banty knows her own eggs, pretty generously scattered about, I wouldn't have any idea.....

11618

11618

Sunday, February 11th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and cool and lovely.

The Chinese magnolias continue unfolding, and I am

like to drop in at Yucca for a little visit, if I didn't chance to be busy. He remained until long after dark and we had such a pleasant little coverage of the no end of town settlement points of interest.

He asked if he and Kay might come down on the Sabbath afternoon with a view to picking me up, after an examination by Kay of the Magnolias, and taking me to town to see the new domicile. I agreed although I begrudged the Sunday evening time loss since I lean heavily on Sunday evening broadcasts to keep me abreast with world doings.

Fairly early this morning Natalie called to ask if my day was all taken up. "Sort of", was my response. She said she wanted to submit a couple of manuscripts to some sort of a thing in Lafayette, Baton Rouge or some place, and would be so appreciative if I could run through them with her this afternoon. I suggested she come at 1 o'clock and perhaps we could chat through them before the registers arrived.

On hanging up, I turned back for another call, -- from Marshall, of all places. He "socket" apparently didn't have anything in particular to say although I assume there may have been something I didn't notice particularly. She did mention having set out three peach trees the other day and hoped I would come up to see them yesterday and understood he had been ill and that she understood he had lost much weight. I



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She said she had passed by Hodges Gardens yesterday and under-  
Mr. Hodges had been unwell and had lost much weight.  
was surprised because I had never thought of him as  
having any weight to lose. I promised to  
write me a Hody note. She said Ola Mae was fine  
but terribly busy. I wasn't surprised, since I had  
not heard from her in almost two years. The Rocket said  
"unt"illie had written her that the registers had moved  
to town. The Rocket asked me how I thought they would  
feel if she dropped them a letter. I told  
her I thought they would feel surprised whereupon we  
both laughed. I guess that was about all there was  
to the conversation and I still am wondering why  
she bothered to call.

As I hung up on this second call, I turned  
back to pick up the receiver on a third  
in-coming call. It was Mildred Cunningham, saying  
she and Peyton would love to come down to see the  
magnolias this afternoon as Celeste had told her yesterday  
they ought to make it real soon although Celeste  
would be at Hodges Gardens but she felt sure I would  
be home. I certainly would, trying  
to lend Natalie a hand. Mildred said her Alernadria  
daughter and husband with 16 guests were spending  
today at the Hertzeg island camp, down by Magnolia  
and wanted to meet Mildred and Peyton here..  
With the Cunninghams, this would total about 20 which  
isn't too helpful when one is trying to concentrate  
on a manuscript before the Registers were  
scheduled to appear. So many  
people are so courteous about wanting to come  
at any time when it will not inconvenience you  
unless your conveniences should not co-incide with  
theirs when they will be glad to come anyway since  
they simply can't appear at any other time than when  
convenient for them.

I suppose one would feel himself forsaken if  
people didn't want to gang up on a Sabbath afternoon but the ne-  
of being alone for a few hours would, it seems to me, be re-  
reshing.

Samuel P. Simpson, Jr. said to tell Carolyn if I  
questioned at Carolyn's request, reported the

11620

13611

Monday, February 12th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Pure summer, the sky cloudless, the thermometer  
in the 80's and the majority of the Chinese magnolias  
in full flower. The heat wave will continue for the next  
several days, it is said.

At the coffee hour this morning, mine hostess  
spoke of her afternoon at Hodges Gardens. The cold had  
knocked out most of the flowers, the Chinese magnolias  
looked tawdry and there were nigh few camellias, but  
there were nice things in the conservatories. I must  
inquire about one point she didn't mention, the new mentel  
being built there. It is said it isn't completed  
yet but is booked up through Easter when it is finished.

She did see Mr. and Mrs. Hodges and found Mr.  
Hodges looking terribly thin. They invited her over to the  
island mansion but she declined, having several  
guests with her.. She in turn invited the Hodges to come  
over here to see the magnolias and they tentatively  
accepted. When they come, of course, it is I who  
will do the entertaining and I forwarded a  
letter this morning to Mr. and Mrs. Hodges, saying  
I would advise them when the magnolias appeared  
at their best, --hopin' to stave them off, and saying that  
should I get over into the Many area with the registers, I  
would 'phone them. I have no  
desire to entertain the Hodges when and if, as has been  
rumored, Sister honors us with a prolonged  
visit.

I am glad to report that a former  
secretary, banged up in an auto wreck yesterday, is  
being released from the hospital on the  
morrow. Mark, son of Will Rodgers,  
was alone in his car around 10 yesterday morning a mile or two  
below the spillway when the car left the road on a curve,  
turned over three times, throwing out Mark on  
the third turnover and crushing the car into  
kindling. I believe a couple of wheels and  
the engine removed and the rest cast onto a junk heap.  
I must say Mark was ~~back~~ it was the car and not himself  
who landed there.



03011

11621

I think I did not mentioned anything in particular about the Register rent house in yesterday's memo. Well, there isn't very much to mention about it. It's a small, ranch type house which houses most of the things from the Baton Rouge apartment. Living room and a bedroom occupy the length of the house on the side facing the street. A hall in the middle of the house runs the length of the building, paralleling the street and the living room and bedroom. On the opposite side of the hall giving away from the street, are a kitchen, a bathroom, a small office for each member of the two member household, and perhaps a small bedroom. It seems compact and quite small to me. There are a couple of nice cabinets, brought from Baton Rouge, some contemporary, plain sofas and chairs, a couple of pretty statuettes and that about does it. As I understand it, there's a lot of furniture in warehouses somewhere and I suppose when a new house it built, it will be constructed to house such treasures, oil paintings and so on, although, so far as James is concerned, I think he would be quite contented to let the present set-up serve permanently. If I could, as they can, have what I wanted, I couldn't imagine such a home but, obviously, as has been remarked before,

there is no accounting for taste.

This sheet just got stuck and I had to remove it but for once it didn't get torn on the sides. May the repair man turn up soon.....

11622

03011

Tuesday, February 13th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continuing pure summer.

The Chinese magnolia rug patterns beneath the trees increases in circumference and the nap of pearly petals grows greater in depth. Now is the time for the Hodges to make their appearance but I'm hoping they don't, -- I have so many things I want to do besides chit-chatting.

James called last night. I had called the house earlier and talked with Kay but she was complaining of pain in her hip and I didn't ask her about her husband. When he called me, I gathered she had mentioned that I had called. He said the anti-pain pills she had taken Sunday night had made her groggy most of the day and that she had folded up right after supper last night and was lost in dreamland.

Now that six months or more have elapsed since her operation, I should suppose the hip pain might have been expected to have vanished before this late date. Possibly there is a nerve business that occasions her discomfiture and pain. That she should still be on crutches, too, suggests her recovery is going to be a mighty long one.

He said they had gone to town in the morning and found a walnut corner cupboard they both liked and that it had been delivered to their house almost before they got home. I hope such little excursions provide her with a measure of diversion. Sooner or later she will get to know the lady doctor and one hopes an emphasis on the mental treatment may benefit the nerves.

James is going ahead with doing the camp over, putting in windows, Venetian blinds, air conditioning the wing and so on. I think he loves preparing it for her as a place where he hopes she can relax when real Spring breaks through. For much of the time, Kay has a restless energy that keeps Kay pretty much on the move when she is strong enough physically to get about.



11623

11623

Carmen called me this morning to say that a couple of organizations in town have decided to send the Hatchitoches Christmas Festival Queen to Washington, D.C. to participate in the Mardi Gras Ball held at the Sheraton-Park on March 3rd. Just what Carmen's role in the hejira may be isn't clear to me. Perhaps she will serve as the young lady's escort or dragon or duenna or some such. Be that as it may, Carmen, who has never been on the East Coast seems entranced at the prospect and I, for one, am not prepared to say if Hatchitoches will get more benefit by way of publicity out of the jaunt than the participants will get fun... This must be about the time the R. E. A. folks will be in Atlantic City but that pow-wow falls into the junket category, too, and so I reckon both the Washington and the Atlantic City fandango will be about as beneficial to nobody as the other.

A Valentine came to hand today from Patty Segleau and on it she penned a line, asking me if I received a Christmas gift from her direction this past holiday season.

I shall respond tonight, admitting receipt of the gift, at the same time expressing my delight at having her address, as carried on the Valentine envelope, so that I might acknowledge the aforesaid Christmas gift since it hailed from a store giving no indication of Patty's street number which, I am reminded by the Valentine, is 4438 Carondelet. From the Segleau inquiry, I take it the little remembrance I sent Patty by Dave Dugan two or three weeks back hasn't as yet reached its destination although, naturally, I did not refer to same.

I didn't see my 9 o'clock coffee companion this morning, what with today being Country Club day which I always like because that means J. H. will dine with us at the big house and I always like that. Somebody said that Juanita A. was spending the morning at the hospital but the operation must have been minor since she expected to return home this evening. My friend Mark, of Sunday's auto accident, was back home, and sent home from the go-round..... and everybody seems lucky on this

11624

11624

Wednesday, February 14th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and continued summery. I don't suppose it has been so long since the last rain but the ground appears mighty dry and the present cloudless days and mild but constant breezes tend to produce the same effect any heat wave brings forth. Tonight the sky is flooded with moonbeams and twilight seems to have continued even though the hour indicates it is really night.

I was enchanted this morning when the postman handed me a Valentine from Lyme. I haven't read its message as yet but I have loved the lovely card with the nice plump red heart within the tinselled outer heart and I have it here before me and shall pursue the text on the morrow, if and when, it turns out that tomorrow wasn't quite so busy and that things dovetail a little more neatly in the secretarial department. In the mean time, I feel the talisman of companionship today's greeting has brought and so it's Valentine's Day regardless and tomorrow will be Valentine's Day all over again.

I did quite a lot of gardening of the rougher sort today, digging stuff difficult to dig and generally tearing up things like a beaver tears things down in building a dam.

Doreatha, the cook, had to spend today in Shreveport for her annual check-up at the hospital and so we dined across the fence where everything seemed pretty lovely in view of all the enthusiasms for having the house done over, etc., etc.



11625

11625

One always keeps dinner and supper appointments on the dot across the fence and so I was distressed when heading for 5:30 supper to encounter a visitor, --James, -- who had spent the afternoon at the camp, it seems, stopping by Yucca on his way home. He remained until dark, knocking out secretarial assistance and gumming up my news hour but I can catch the news, in limited form at 10 o'clock, and the mail on the morrow.

He is having quite a time with his spring program at home, what with la Stern having persuaded Kay to come to spend a few weeks with her around the middle of March. It is said Irma and Farley are driving to New York about that time and will come this way, pick up Kay and so proceed to Manhattan via the Bluff. I believe James protested with some vehemence about the whole thing, pointing out to Kay that she is in no condition to be making such trips in the first place, frowning on such jaunts by auto and pointing out that it is Kay who needs first consideration in recuperation before bouncing all over the map. I think he is so right. My guess is that Kay should not have to be taking anti-pain pills with the frequency she does and I am hoping she may have a session with the lady doctor before she undertakes any more South Carolina trips. I shall try to put a couple of fleas in the lady doctor's ear before her new patient confers with her. If I can provide a somewhat objective sketch of the situation before she contacts the patient, the picture thus presented might be helpful, I hope, all around.

Of one thing I am quite sure, I think Kay is quite wrong in forever hot footing it for the Bluff where she certainly isn't needed and where, with every visit, her own health sags considerably.

Mrs. Walker advised me yesterday that Margaret Dixon, Editor of the Baton Rouge Morning Advocate, wants to come up to Natchitoches on March 10th, -- a Saturday, I believe, stopping off here for an interview and thence on to the Walkers where a reception that night will be given for her. I wish Margaret would be satisfied with her afternoon interview and thus let me escape the reception in town. Well, we shall see. And again my thanks for a happy Valentine's Day.....

11626

Thursday, February 15th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Thunder storms between 4 and 8 this morning and this afternoon between 4 and 7, followed by clearing skies and a dab of moderate coolness. The Weather Bureau predicts from 6 to 10 degrees temperatures for the next 30 days, taking us into the middle of March when, I suppose, J. Frost will make another round to harvest the tender green things putting out between now and then.

Thanks to this morning's post, I had a letter to add to my Valentine and it goes without saying the sentiments expressed in both provide me with no end of plaisir.

I was sorry about the misadventure on the highway which was certainly the wrong place under too adverse thermometer readings for such business. Little Miss Lee was wise in following up the episode with a good stiff shot of fire water and I am so glad that it apparently turned the trick by staving off a cold.

It goes without saying Lestan was delighted to learn that the suggestion regarding early summer memoranda meets with little Miss Lee's approval. If she has ideas as to how the matter might be handled to better advantage, I have no doubt she will make them between now and then. In view of the usual pressures beginning to exert themselves on little Miss Lee when late summer and early autumn approaches, I can readily understand if such a batch of stuff might prove a little too much and a preference were felt for a compression of daily notations to something like weekly summations, that could be managed alright from this point, --or any way other than that originally suggested.



83811

11627

The day's post brought two or three other communications from thither and yon. I shall enclose a couple to keep you abreast with things even though there is nothing of particular interest in any of them.

I shall write the boy friend, saying I shall be able to have the painting crated by a local carpenter and forwarded to New Orleans for the diplomatic pouch. I haven't the slightest doubt the picture in question is among the treasures here although I remember the one he describes only from where I last saw it in the 60th or 61st Street apartment. As pictures go, if memory serves, it never did anything in particular for me but I recall how fond he was of it. When all his household things came here, they arrived in one great big box, -- I guess the biggest box I ever saw. To be put under a roof, the box had to be opened and the things removed. I never did remove the cardboard coverings from the pictures but I suppose I shall have to do so to determine if I am forwarding the proper one for, as I recall, there are several. This seems to be the one object of his furnishings which he sets highest store by and I shall be the happier to have it back under his wing. I shall be the happier just in realizing that it is once more where it should be, -- in the hands of the owner for whom it means something.

The note from Mrs. Spinks still bears the faint aroma of the little pound cake that it accompanied. I am glad she liked the "tapestry" which I sent the family last Christmas time, one of the artist's creations made out of patchwork quilt pieces which the artist had made for somebody or other who rejected it and which I was glad to obtain for the Spinks who seem to like primitive creations.

It has been such a happy Valentine's season, thanks to little Miss Lee and May G. Washington's natal Day be a happy one in Lyme.....

11628

83811

Friday, February 16th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy until sundown, followed by clearing and a nice fat moon, and somewhat cooler.

At coffee, I learned J. H. seems far from well, that he finally took a sleeping pill at 2 this morning and, although he got the plantation going before breakfast, he returned to his downy couch after breakfast and he rested again after mid-day dinner. I saw him at supper and I thought he seemed more relaxed and I thought he ate well. But he apparently had rested some this afternoon since he volunteered the thought that this week's column about Substitute For Swan was a good one.

After my coffee when I had returned to Yucca, my former secretary, Mark Rogers, dropped in to see me, his head encased in white bandages. I was naturally glad to see that he is progressing so speedily from his auto wreck of last Sunday. He returns to the hospital on Monday for new dressings.

With Fug, bou and Smith Pease to give me a hand, I got a lot of trellis work done and some odds and ends in the kana section. I am hoping to round up some workers to take up and put down the front gallery pavement at Yucca next week. The armadillo tunneling beneath the brick has certainly made a mare's nest of that section.

All the lady banties seem mighty busy, parking on eggs these days so that I seldom see them except at breakfast and supper time. The roosters must remove themselves to stand guard over the hens most of the time for I seldom see them except at meal time. It has become quite a ceremony when I observe them assembled for their supper of cracked corn, for all remain patiently quiet until I call to the little black hen



11629

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setting on 15 eggs atop one of the armoires, or she always awaits my call before descending to join the others on the greensward. All hanties present keep any eye cocked in her direction, knowing perfectly well she will be putting in an appearance shortly but never do they fail, when she finally sails down from on high, to scream and make all kinds of racket as though nothing like the performance had ever happened before, whereupon they all fall to eating with gusto. I call, --for what reason I know not, the little black hen Mrs. Murgatroid, which, I suppose, may have been some minor character in some English novel I may once have read but have long since forgotten. Be that as it may, Mrs. Murgatroid indulges twice a day in her grand entrance and then, about five or ten minutes later, hops up on the little table on the gallery by the boudoir door and thence up to the top of the armoire to resume her vigil atop this vantage point where her eggs will eventually hatch. And when the biddies come out of their shells and Mrs. Murgatroid has them on the ground, I shall miss this morning and evening charade she and her feathered associates are wont to put on, and, I suspect, they are going to miss the fun, too....

James just called. He is bringing a negro carpenter, provided by the lumber yard in town, to do some work at the camp tomorrow. I love the carpenter's name: -- B. C. Noah. It will be comforting, should it start raining, to realize we have an authentic Noah handy.

I. S. Willard called just as James and I hung up. Even as I, so she means Aunt Willie's tricks to drag Kay back to South Carolina when it is obvious Kay needs quiet and attention more than Aunt Willie and especially as the latter has plenty of servants, nurses and so on to aid her in carrying out her whims, chief of which seems to be to keep Kay chasing back and forth from here to there.

At supper I learned Sister is having all her teeth extracted and will come here Wednesday for a visit.

My next week hold more promise of peace for Lyme.....

11630

11630

Sunday, February 18th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and cooler with a half inch of rain over the weekend.

It was a pleasant weekend but one which left me a little disappointed over programs lost.

I was indebted to little Miss Lee the other day for letting me know that Invitation to Learnings was going to feature the Henry Adams Edition and I wanted to hear it ever so much. I usually am able, --now football or basket or baseball programs intervening or appropriating the broadcasts, either over a Dallas station on Saturday at 8 or over Memphis on Sunday night.. I missed both because of the presence of a guest whom I enjoyed but should have been able to pluck off the Adams business

and sandwiched the other in between.

James spent Saturday at the camp, bringing two carpenters with him and he seemed delighted with the amount of work they accomplished. The father and son combination in the wood working section operated just like clockwork, he said and he came over about 1:00 to have a sandwich and said both workmen said they had never seen the old buildings on Melrose and would like to examine the type of work done in the colonial period. I told him to bring them over for a tour when they were finished which he said would be about 8:30. As nobody had appeared by 6:30, I concluded the pressure of business had kept everyone employed until dark and what with the threat of rain, I assumed they had returned to town and so I prepared myself a big glass of crushed ice and a coke, kicked off my shoes and generally prepared for a session with the

~~Ballistics of been gutted and crushed the whole I dropped~~



08311

11631

It was James, saying the carpenters had returned to town but he had come over to say Howdy. He was in no hurry and just after he had left, the 'phone rang, --I. S. Willard calling on behalf of Kay who wondered if James had got lost but, fortunately, before I. S. Willard got the problem stated, she interjected to report that James had just arrived at home.

This morning was a busy one, several plantation people whom I had known of old who had taken up residences other place, dropped in from time to time to say Howdy, --Y. C. from Shreveport, some folks from Houston and so on. Blythe called in the middle of things to thank me for a letter I had sent about Rand's possessions at the camp and to report that although she had hoped to come up this afternoon, people had phoned they were going to drop in on her and that she would come one day during the week.

A little after 11, I took off my long beard, expecting to dash across the fence for 11:30 dinner but before I got my shirton, people appeared on the gallery, --the Rocket and two Marshall friends, traveling from New Orleans to Marshall. I told them I could allot them 21 minutes which I did, for I realized it wasn't the character of personality but a desire to see the old building that brought them. I wrote to Carolyn about a point in my last Sunday letter but she, of course, had not received it.

Elma called in the midst of that session, saying she and John wanted to dash across the fence for 11:30 dinner but before I got my shirton, people appeared on the gallery, --the Rocket and two Marshall friends, traveling from New Orleans to Marshall. I told them I could allot them 21 minutes which I did, for I realized it wasn't the character of personality but a desire to see the old building that brought them. I wrote to Carolyn about a point in my last Sunday letter but she, of course, had not received it.

Carmen tells me Edith Porter goes on a conducted tour of Europe in mid-April, returning in June, covering everything from Ireland to Rome, traveling by boat across the ocean and it sounds tiresome to me.....

11632

08311

Monday, February 19th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and cool.

I guess I had better do a column on my neighbors' hogs. Urban readers will probably find such a subject dull enough but rural readers may find an expression of at least one of their own difficulties, this particular one seeming to be accented every spring and autumn. I had difficulties in the marauding porker department on Saturday, the same ones on Sunday and this morning at dawn I found the same culprits rooting up things along the front gallery. Thrice have we summoned the owner but J. H. has asked me to advise the store if the same problem crops up again when the heavy artillery will be brought into play.

Mrs. Walker called to report on their weekend jaunt through St. Francisville and Clinton over the weekend. Oakley, the Audubon museum, was closed when they arrived Saturday evening but it was still early enough to observe a fine pair of peacocks doing their stuff in the garden. In Clinton, the old bank which Lyle once came within an inch of buying and restoring is now being put back in order by some Clinton group and it appears a fine job is being done. It is a Greek temple type of building, dating from the 1850's, I believe, and I'm glad it is being restored. The Walkers encountered a hail storm between Alexandria and Boyce on their way home last night. It was of sufficient intensity to compell them to pull off to the side of the road until it had played itself out.



11633

11633

I shouldn't have been surprised this afternoon when James appeared. Kay's lawyer from Franklin, La., was scheduled to run up to Natchitoches today to see something about income tax and I had assumed James might not get down this way but I was wrong. He asked me if I wouldn't like to see how the camp was progressing and, naturally, I said I would. I am astonished by the amount of work achieved in a single go-round last Saturday. I think it is going to be quite pleasant and it obviously is providing him with a lot of pleasure in thus having something to do.

He said the girls were still chatting when he reached home last night. Irma agreed with Kay when the latter said they had been talking about him and he confided to them that he and I had spent the afternoon exclusively taking them apart. I am so glad I. S. Willard has been in town for this weekend for she and Kay seem to have no end of things to chatter about and it probably affords them both no end of entertainment.

I got back to Yucca about 4 at the same time some workmen and an overseer attacked the front gallery of Yucca where the animals had tunneled under the bricks. The bricks were taken up and where the valley had existed before, they created a mild mountain and put the bricks back. It is a betch job which interests me very little and will provide me with a point of quaintness in plantation engineering whenever I have unexpected visitors.

At supper tonight, J. H. mentioned, in response to my question, on the R.E. A. jaunt a week from Saturday. Perhaps he is sending Celeste by train with the other travelers and he will follow by air. Or perhaps he was mistaken for I cannot believe he isn't heading out until March 3rd. Well, we shall see.....

11634

11634

Tuesday, February 20th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with sprinkles tonight and more promised for the morrow.

Sister had announced she would arrive tomorrow but got here today. She brought a cake she had had baked and decorated in commemoration of Celeste's and J. H.'s wedding anniversary. There are said to be two rings on the cake and the legend reads, of all things,

Happy Birt day.

She announced at supper tonight that she had invited Dan's wife down for dinner tomorrow and told he was going to see her. Why he should want to see her, I know not. She said she had seen J. H. at the camp and that he was going to see her. She said she had seen off hand that two servants here might have somehow been expected to muddle through.

I, for one, am enchanted at the prospects for rain on the morrow.

As for myself, I had a fairly busy day, -- things and people. Around 1:30, while busy with a secretary, I was interrupted by a phone call. It was from Kay. She asked me if I would ask James to call her when he passed this way. I didn't know James had been at the camp all morning. Kay said she had been so busy with her tax accounts and that her lawyer, Mr. Brumby, had not been able to get up from Franklin because of a cold.



11631

11635

James a pear shortly and I dismissed the secretary and I chatted with him after he had called Kay. The latter, it seems, had misplaced her keys and thought James could revive her memory. He said she had found them immediately after having called me.

I. S. Willard called late last night. She remarked that she had mentioned to Kay yesterday that she thought she would be going to Shreveport in a day or two on business and Kay said she would like to drive with her, being, as so many women are said to be, "without a thing to wear". I believe I. S. Willard tended to shy away from shopping companionship on days devoted to business. In the matter of going to the Bluff, she said she had opined to Kay that she thought the trip rather too strenuous for her but Kay explained Aunt Willie wanted to give Mrs. Crabtree a little vacation. I. S. W. asked if it would be easier all around if a companion or nurse of Charleston spent the time with Aunt Willie but Kay explained Aunt Willie didn't want it handled that way. ummmmmmm.

Although the thermometer readings are moderate, --fluctuating between midnight and midday from the 40's to the 70's, vegetation grows right along as though unmindful of the cool nights. The Chinese magnolias are putting out their leaves and the milky-white ribbon grass has already climbed 6 or 8 inches from the rich brown earth. More people, in the road is another sign and among those honoring me with a visit today were the artist and May Balthazar who were especially interested in doings in the bassecour where May discovered 8 duck eggs, much to her delight. I have the spading in the gourd garden going pretty well but I shall not regret a suspension of the work on the morrow if the rain will only tend to keep people from circulating.

I am glad John Glen got around the world three times safely and I haven't a doubt he is of the same frame of mind about the matter tonight. Smile.....

11631

11636

Wednesday, February 21st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and war with a fine thunder storm going on tonight.

A 'phone call from I. S. Willard indicated there would be a coffee hour at 11 this morning for Kay at the home of I. S. Willard. I thought that was nice.

At 11 this morning, James called. I asked after his good health and opined that Kay was currently at coffee but it turned out she wasn't and that the coffee isn't scheduled until tomorrow at 11, -- a mere 24 hour difference being of scant account, in the I. S. W. calendar.

James called me and I opined any time he would like to come he would be fine if he would just let me know which day would be best. He said he would like to make it right after 12 o'clock and he arrived promptly at 4:15. With no pressing work schedule, he probably hasn't the vaguest notion as to the importance to me in arranging the work of my helpers to clear decks either before or after his visits.

Immediately on his departure, a secretary showed up and so I had the pleasure of communing with little Miss Lee before supper time. I must say it is heartening that a letter, penned in Lyme on Monday, can reach its destination just as fast as one written in Hatchitoches on the same date. I suppose the mathematical equation would read something like 15 miles is to 1,500 miles as something is to something else.

I was so glad to learn that the early Monday snow degenerated into sleet and then into rain for I assume that



11637

took some of the hazards out of transportation. Tonight the radio speaks of blizzards swirling out of Nebraska in the direction of New York and I hold the thought Lyme may not be in the path of the thing.

I am glad you mentioned Natalie's picture being in the paper. Nobody mentioned it to me and in last week's issue, I didn't learn about the picture of Mr. Walker receiving the cup, awarded Cane River 4emo until somebody or other cut it out of the paper and forwarded same to me.

Well, observation of today's anniversary turned out somewhat differently than planned by our visitor. No one came to the town and nobody from across the fence. We had a small party for dinner and what ever happened to the rings and the legend, I wouldn't know.

James reported, having installed a new well at the camp this afternoon. He envisioned having the negro helper of the well man take down the well house, made of large timbers, weighting about five or six hundred pounds. The helper, one George Brown, stands between six and a half and seven feet and weight 331 pounds, James said, and all muscle. When James spoke to him, handing him a crowbar, asking him about taking the thing apart and tossing it off somewhere, Brown bent over, ran his hand along the base of the well house and then, without any gusto, simply picked up the whole thing and disposed of it where ever James had suggested. That delighted James. He said Kay joined in wanting me to come to sup out with them tonight but, as I had many things to do, I declined with regret and pleasure.....

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11638

Thursday, February 22nd, 1962.

Memorandum: I. S. Wall & Sons coffee.  
 I. S. Wall & Sons coffee.  
 Cloudy and warm.

Another holiday arrived and, as so often before on legal holidays in this part of the world, I was scarcely conscious of it except for the absence of postal service.

The plants are operated as usual, the schools put the children through their accustomed paces, and although it is said the banks in town were closed, the stores, offices, Red Cross and so on were functioning just as though the national day of connections as such were not a thing, resolute in ignoring other troubles at home and abroad.

[illegible]

The most amusing quotation of the day came from James who, apropos of something, said he was reminded of the little boy at 40 acres store who responded when James asked him how he was getting along in school, said:

"I'se doin' alright, I guesss in everythin' sving that  
Arthematic stuff. Looks like I was alright in the taking  
away part but I can't get on to that addin' to stuff so good.....



11639

As for the Founder's Birthday at this bend of the road, it was observed fairly quietly at the big house where the visitor lingers on. I had a few people from California, Canada, Florida, Nevada and Alexandria. Along about 4:30, I had a call from the company installing the Register well at the camp. I was told that workmen from Shreveport would arrive at 5 o'clock to install the filters and was asked to contact Mr. Register to convey the news. I was unsuccessful in reaching him at his home. I gave a twist to the grapevine and learned he had been sighted in this area at 12:20 this noon. Another scout with bright eyes was delegated to look across the cotton fields. He report was the presence of a car at the camp. I assumed James was there.

At the news hour, following supper, I tried to get a few reports but had little luck, what with static drowning out most stuff and I was especially disappointed I couldn't establish air wave connections with the Edward Morgan broadcast which I prefer above all others at the present time. I found consolation, however, in the fact that even though I couldn't get him at that time, I might track him down at the same time The World might come on the air and I would gladly sacrifice that program for the other.

The time arrive, I sampled the air waves and I was delighted that I could indeed get the Morgan program. But then, I had to cut it off when a tap came at the door. It was James, bringing me a report of the day's doings, a pair of sandals, a bottle of wine and a transcript of some material about Guatemala which I had been casting about for.

He called his wife and when she suggested a fine steak for him at home, he settled down for a sampling of the good life.

11640

Friday, February 23rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy this morning with a dab of rain before noon and a few gusts of wind reaching tornado proportions in some neighboring parishes, including the Jonesborough area where the broadcasting tower was knocked down and some houses unroofed. A pleasant sun under or above a cool west breeze kept things cool enough for the balance of the day and tonight the sky is radiant with stars.

Inside and out, around and about the big house, things continue swirling, the presiding priestess having a zestful time and servants trying to scurry out of her way at the slightest opportunity or at none at all, if one doesn't present itself. Thus far the visitation hasn't demonstrated so much noise as usual but more than the usual demonstrations of scatter-brain exhibitions. At the coffee hour this morning, mine hostess said that she herself has just about become a nervous wreck although the two ladies have seen little of each other. There was a visit across the fence last night from six until eight and, unfortunately, as all of us have noted at some time or another in our lives, two hours can be mighty long. Ten or twelve people, immediately concerned with domestic matters and store operations, are tonight holding the thought that by some special dispensation, a measure of peace may return sometime tomorrow and I don't mind saying I am one of these concentrating on the aspiration with a degree of vigor.

I learned only today that for the past twenty odd years I have been putting an "e" on the end of the word, pecan, and my mental picture of the word written with six letters



01611

11641

instead of five is going to take me quite a while to obliterate that concept from my gray matter.

I had supposed that because there was no round made yesterday by the postman, today's batch might have been quite a double dip if not, indeed, heavy but I was wrong for the mail was lighter than usual, meaning, I suppose, that there will be a bumper crop on the morrow.

I happened to be at the post office this morning at the time the President was welcoming Colonel Glen back home and as there is a TV in the store, I stuck my nose against the screen and enjoyed the spectacle which I thought went off with the adroitness one has come to expect from Kennedy appearances. I thought everyone participating played out his part with neatness and dispatch and I thoroughly enjoyed the whole business.

I think I did not refer to any of the enclosures in yesterday's memo. I might have remarked, however, that the letter from the man in service to the Red Cross was sent along merely as another evidence of our friends' efforts, in spite of mighty little if any formal education, to harmonize in practice with the age.

I haven't heard, much less seen, anyone from town today. Deratha told me at supper time that she had observed no one at the camp today. Perhaps there was a shopping hejira to Shreveport or some such or possibly the Franklin lawyer appeared and had to be entertained or some such. Be that as it may, I am all in favor of whatever arrangements carried through in what I trust was a joint effort at getting roots further into the soil of the good earth of the Parish and there will be ample reports concerning same, I have no doubt, as between now at the Sabbath. And may it be a quiet one for little Miss Lee at Lyme.....

01611

11642

Sunday, February 25th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The cold snap we were scheduled to receive never did arrive and vegetation keeps on popping out all over the place. The butterfly lilies are pushing along steadily and the banana plants are a foot high in some places. In short, it's going to be an early Spring if Jack Frost doesn't make a late visit and knock everything silly.

We observed the Lady's birthday across the fence this noon but she was highly nervous and rather sharp with her husband which contributed little gaiety. I have observed before that whenever she is a recipient of a pretty gift from her husband, she usually re-acts unpleasantly to him which seems puzzling. I recall what a racket there was when the last new Cadillac was presented. Now it seems she has been presented with a jaunt to Europe for the month of August and while she is impatient to get started and is delighted over the prospects, she is quite touchy on any subject he takes up and I, for one, cannot make any sense out of the pattern.

You would have loved it as much as I when, after the husband had withdrawn and she and I were having demi-tasse, she went into raptures about little Miss Lee and said that sooner or later, it simply had to be that little Miss Lee, Leston and herself would have to take a leisurely trip by boat to Europe and that the three of us would make the most wonderful traveling companions imaginable. Imagine.

Little Miss Lee was singled out for many words of praise, and there was much talk about little Miss Lee coming down here to be her guest when so many people in town, Mez, Ora and so on would want to entertain her and so on and so forth.

I should have reported before now that everybody was delighted on Saturday afternoon when Sister finally took off for home. The balance of my



11643

11643

day was busy with people, --James at 1 o'clock, some Kansans at 2, Marylanders at 3 and so on through until after 6.

James invited me to dine with him and Kay on Saturday night but I declined with thanks and instead accepted an invitation for tonight. He said he would be around to pick me up at 4. True to his word he was here at 4, having arrived, in fact, at 2, thus being able to assist in entertaining a few callers, Father Calahan and so on. I had been expecting Blythe all week but, in spite of the fine weather yesterday and today, she never did put in an appearance. About 4:30, in response to James' request, I drove over to the camp to observe the progress he is making in alterations and I was most favorably impressed. We sat for an hour observing the scenery and then returned here so I might take off my long beard and put on some fresh clothes, after which we drove to town, picked up Kay and went on to the hotel for dinner and then, after stopping in Pecanec Park again for half an hour, we came back here and so I was back to home base by ten o'clock, pleasantly filled with good food and bubbling over with amusing conversation.

Kay expects Mr. Brumby in the morning for a round and then, I suppose, will begin making plans for the jaunt to South Carolina. I never mentioned that place for the whole trip seems the height of absurdity to me.

Kay wants to make an encircling tour of the United States, going up the east coast as far as Maine and thence across the northern states, down the west coast and thence back to where ever starting point might originate, --Hatchitoches, I suppose. She wants me to go along. I said I thought that would be a wonderful trip and I could see no point in raising the question as to whom we might expect to care for the furred and feathered friends since, naturally, I never intend getting tangled up in such a business.

I held the thought there was a measure of relaxation at Lyme over this weekend and that the snowstorms, said to be marching across the northern section of the country, may have skipped Lyme in their eastward course.....

11644

11644

Monday, February 26th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Partly cloudy with a spanking breeze from the south and much too hot for February, --upper 80's, and leaves on everything except the pecans unfolding mightily.

At the coffee hour, mine hostess and I re-lived yesterday's birthday party at Magnolia all over again. I gather there were six or eight girl friends present and each had attached a birthday card to a gift and we went over each card and each verse, and we sob for joy for almost every one and the whole business was all so darling.

On quite another front there was a triangular thing yesterday I didn't get around to report last night. Carmen called me to report in the afternoon while James and Father Calahan were here and so I didn't pry for details.

The triangle is made up of the artist, Carmen and Mrs. C. Beth Beaufort Cloutier and is arranged thus:

Three or four weeks back, Carmen dropped by to see me with some canvases and some cloth. She wanted the artist to paint her a couple of pictures and to make her a couple of primitive cushion covers. I recommended that she herself drop by the artist's house and explain all which she'd.

A couple of week's later, Carmen called me to ask if the four items were finished. I don't know why she didn't dial the artist direct. I inquired of the artist as to the status of the order and passed on to Carmen what the artist reported, to wit, that the cushion covers were finished but the pictures weren't. A few days elapsed and



11645

la Beaufort brought a dozen people to the artist's house, a merchant prince, NewEngland industrialists and so on, intent of purchasing pictures. The artist was provoked by the invasion, unannounced and unwanted from such a quarter, and somehow in the confusion, Beth got hold of the cushion covers and took them with her although the artist protested she couldn't recall, under the hubbub, to whom they really did belong. Yesterday Carmen drove down to pick up her pictures and cushions and got only the former. Naturally she, in turn, was provoked with Beth and there the fat fries and la Hunter and la Breazeale are mad and Beth is glad and nobody wonders why Beth so frequently finds herself a central point from which all other points scurry away with all possible speed.

Dr. Talley, the New Orleans lady physician, dropped in this afternoon. She was wearing one black shoe, her other foot in a white plaster of Paris cast and her appearance seemed very odd as she progressed across the greensward. . . She had undergone an operation two or three years ago to correct a faulty left foot, caused by infantile paralysis. A few months back she fell from a chair and broke the bones in the bottom of her right foot, just going to prove that some people don't have all the luck. Dr. Talley has something to do with the State Board of Health and this carries her into various parts of the State every few months. She was speaking this afternoon about some of the communities she visits where the people speak a mixture of Spanish, French and gumbo English which is understandable when spoken but probably incomprehensible for the most part if written. I reckon it is students from such localities which present so many problems to people like Natalie. Dr. Talley sighed and said she so much wished a few members of the Peace Corps could be sent to help some of these communities get into the swing of the 20th century.

I hoped to get some assistance this morning from a couple of brawny backs but while the brawn appeared, the remnants of weekend spirits tended to short-circuit abilities to keep the brawn properly exerted and so I let the whole project rest on the shelf for another day when the weekend will be farther behind and the next one still far enough away to lend sobriety to those who may lend a hand.

I anticipate the typewriter repair man any day now and accordingly I may be using a different script shortly during the interim this machine is away.....

Figure 1. The effect of the concentration of the inhibitor on the rate of polymerization.

Tuesday, February 27th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and warm until 2 this afternoon when a drizzle developed and the temperature fell and tonight it is sort of 40-ish.

And with the change in weather came a change in typewriters. I hold the thought this one may make easier reading so long as it substitutes for the old one undergoing repairs. H. went to New Orleans with some other business men and returns tomorrow. His wife spent the day in town and I know not if she returned to spend the night in the country or not. I saw her momentarily at 8 this morning but she was in too great a rush to chat. She surprised me mildly yesterday when, speaking of the August jaunt to Europe, she stated that she was giving thought to the possibility that she might eventually take up her residence in France "if anything happened here". I must admit that I never could imagine her initial trip to Europe as having any chance of success because I failed to realize at the time that all she wanted to do was to be with other people just like herself, and all of them pretty much enjoying immunity from any influences of the countries visited. Now I find myself astonished she would be dreaming of living in Europe where I should imagine she would have the poorest kind of a time but perhaps I am not taking into consideration factors such as I failed to take into account in regard to the other matter. For all I know, France may have counterparts of the Parishes of Watchitoches and Avoyelles and, if so, then everything would be just as darling for her there as here. Long since have I given up thought of trying to anticipate such points. Nevertheless, I must confess I continue finding myself startled when I hear such plans or hopes or whatever they may be called.

James called last night from town, saying he had been at the camp painting all day and was physically tired but pleased with the results of his exertions. I didn't talk with Ray and suppose she's tired after doing income tax with her Mr. Murphy. As tomorrow, I'm tired without any particular excuse for being so and propose folding



11647

Tuesday, February 27th, 1962.

I doubt if there is anything of interest in any of the enclosures but I enclose them regardless. It was noble of the General to take time out to pen a long hand letter even though my secretary would have appreciated it more if it had been typed. An envelope from Aunt Willie encloses a letter to her from Carolyn, a cousin, with details of her recent doings up to January 12th about which I knew nothing, --trips about the State and so on. I was interested to learn of her enthusiasm over her two nephews, one of whom is getting fine grades at the Waco Alma Mater of the Rocket where he is going to study Law, she reports, and the other is doing wonderfully well in photographic fiddling and such like in High School. Her enthusiasm over her nephews is so understandable but I fear the two summers she gave up to them were something less than advantageous to her and of no great benefit to them unless one may count a couple of seasons of frolic a good investment. The Rocket also stated to Aunt Willie that she regretted not hearing from me any more but explained that I couldn't keep abreast of her whereabouts, making correspondence out of the questions and she certainly had a point there. Camren called me this afternoon to say Goodbye as she leaves early tomorrow for Baton Rouge, New Orleans and Washington. She anticipates being back on Sunday and so will not have much time to explore the glories of the Capitol, what with a frolic in the form of a dinner and dance and a reception of sorts for the Louisiana Queens attending the Mardi Gras festivities I believe her schedule includes a trip through the White House and I should imagine she will enjoy that. I suppose I shall be getting a prolonged telephonic report, come Monday.

James called last night from town, saying he had been at the camp painting all day and was physically tired but pleased with the results of his exertions. I didn't talk with Kay and suppose she was tired after doing income tax with her Mr. Brumby. As for myself, I'm tired without any particular excuse for being so and propose folding

11648

Wednesday, February 28th, 1962.

Memorandum: Rainy and cold. By noon the thermometer in Shreveport had sagged to 32 and will drop into the 20's tonight, it is said. I had hoped the clouds would continue through the night to retain some of the heat but it began clearing in the afternoon and is as clear as a bell tonight. I reckon the new leaves on trees and bushes will awaken on the morrow to find themselves well cooked. We are promised sunshine for the morrow but no rise in temperature and another freeze tomorrow night. Only the wild geese don't seem to pay any attention to the weather reports as they continue their northward migration into the face of ice, sleet and snow awaiting them as they continue their migration.

At coffee this morning, my attention was directed toward a pretty white and yellow flower arrangement, done in town yesterday by Mrs. Mitchell who entertained Celeste and several other ladies at an arrangement meeting in the morning. Celeste said she observed at the time that she thought I would enjoy seeing this particular arrangement and the lady had insisted she bring it down which I thought very kind of her and very kind of Celeste to bring it and establish it in her living room where I could observe it over the demi-tasse.

Celeste says she is going in a truck tomorrow to pick up some lady in town who has a property somewhere outside of town that has lots of dogwood trees and offered Celeste some. Celeste is taking a truck and digger and will pick up the lady. She asked me if I didn't want her to bring me one but I declined with thanks. We already have an ample supply of dogwood and I don't have any space for more. The hill soil is so much better for the dogwood, I think it better to leave them where they thrive to greater advantage, contenting myself with what examples of them we have here.

J. H. returned from New Orleans this noon and, so far as I know, there are no plans for further excursions before Saturday when the party will head out for Atlantic City. Personally, I think



11649

11649

Wednesday, February 29th, 1962.

Celeste, who had her throat painted for some sort of a cough today is silly heading out to dig dogwood on the morrow, what with the weather being in a deep freeze but I reckon she knows what she is doing and she will have all day Friday to stave off another cold before heading out for the east coast the next day.

I had a call from what I took to be a somewhat elderly lady in town this morning. She identified herself with some care but I am sure I do not know her. The point of her call was to say she had enjoyed last week's column which, as she explained, she had read while she was supping one evening last week all by herself and there was something about the column that made her want to linger on where she was and do a bit of dreaming. I couldn't recall what the column was, but, --possibly about Low Paul and Louella,-- but I didn't inquire, but that point since, if its subject matter eluded her, it might have made her feel distressed and so I simply stated how much I appreciated her kindness in calling me.

At this point comes a call from James. He said he spent the day at the camp and that he brought with him a electric stove to take the place of Monday's electric fan. He had a couple of men from the plantation to lend a hand at some carpentry and he said he didn't find the chill too much until mid-afternoon when everybody decided they might as well let Jack Frost take over while they went home. He reported cloud coverage in town and I believe the clouds have returned here, too, which may stave off some of the more intense cold, and if we can escape with nothing more than a gentle freeze of 32 or some such, we shall be lucky's pure supposition on my part, but I assume the Pilgrimage flings wide its doors on the morrow, what with March 1st having always been the date for the opening gun in that considerable charade. Usually somebody was want to send us pamphlets and one would hear references on the radio to the impending doings but with March 1st only a few hours away, I haven't heard a peep from the direction of the Bluff City. Perhaps they don't have to advertise any more. It is possible the ladies are too busy with their costumes to bother about enticing customers.....

11650

11650

Thursday, March 1st, 1962.

# Memorandum:

Cloudy and cold. The thermometer stood at 30 this morning but I didn't notice any ice. We are promised another night of about the same chilliness for tonight, after which it is supposed to grow a little warmer. Thus far the tender new green leaves don't seem to show any damage. Perhaps they have somehow escaped. If not, they will show the ill effects of the Jack Frost visitation when the sun appears once more.

At the Post Office this morning I discovered it was my birthday, not once but twice, all in the same go-round. The nice fat package of Yucca paper arrived safely and I am delighted to be able to draw on it for so much of my correspondence which it will carry all through the ensuing season, thanks to this generous supply. May the Lord bless little Miss Lee.

And in the second birthday department, I found the dandy letter from the same lady, as penned on Friday. It was amidst several communications of which I got around to read but two, -- little Miss Lee's and the one from Robina. There seemed to be a couple of other items from unknown correspondents that I shall explore on the morrow. I was so happy to be able to commune with Lyme and to learn of the many interesting things trounded on in that letter. I did not get around to explore the clipping but am looking forward to that when I get a session with a secretary on the morrow.

Even as little Miss Lee, so does Leston retain a very special place in the heart for Penn Station and most particularly because of the evening of October 26th, 1939. I regret this monument of an era has to be removed for it certainly does possess a grandeur not likely to be repeated in a long time. And speaking of the time element as between the station and the building after which it was fashioned, more than a thousand years stretched between the station construction and the one that inspired it, -- the baths of Caracalla in Rome, if I remember correctly.

It will be wonderful if the columns can be preserved for some other development but I shall always regret that those vast Corinthian ones in the main station, traveling skyward and every skyward, are probably



11651

11651

Thursday, March 1st, 1962

Memorandum

Cloudy and cold. The thermometer stood at 30 this morning and was taken down and put up again but one is thankful for small favors in the preservation of the lesser ones. I have noted what was recommended regarding the collection of daily memos that may be jotted down during the summer interlude. It will be as easy as pie to set them aside from day to day locally, forwarding them promptly when the vacation period concludes.

I am so glad that little Miss Lee was able to keep tabs on Colonel Glenn. It was a remarkable performance and in the appearances he has made since, he gives the impression of being equally capable of dealing with earth pressures with exceeding grace. This noon and tonight I listened to accounts of his reception in Manhattan and I hope to round up more details on additional broadcasts or re-broadcasts tonight. Oddly enough, no account I have listened to thus far gave much attention to atmospheric conditions although I did gather from one remark that it was chilly. Some notion of weather conditions go so far in helping one envision the carrying out of such programs.

It was shocking, the crash of the jet in Jamaica Bay, at about the time the ticktape parade was getting organized. It was bound to have cast something of a pall over the festivities although I assume that many of the participants in the parade may not have even heard of the tragedy until after the welcoming to the portion of the space people were concluded.

My hostess at coffee was coughing this morning and said, and I thought wisely, she was not going to the woods to dig dogwood. At noon, the clerk told me she had changed her mind and was going which struck me as unwise. I shall learn on the morrow if she did or didn't.

Another wild goose migration passed northward overhead this morning and it was wonderful to hear their eerie voices filtering down through the heavy cloud coverage. And so arch begins and so I would say thanks again for such a happy birthday.....

11652

11652

Friday, March 2nd, 1962.

Memorandum

A little chilly but withal clear and therefore seemingly warmer although the thermometer stood at 31 this morning. I can't seem any effects of frost on the new leaves of the banana plants, magnolias or butterfly lilies which seems odd enough.

It was odd enough, too, but withal pleasureable, when, at the Post Office this morning, I discovered it was again my birthday and a nice new ribbon waited me from Lyme. It is all so pleasant to be thus guaranteed against ensuing communications and again, for the billionth time, I am grateful to little Miss Lee for her unfailing thoughtfulness.

I coffeed at 9 across the fence and found the landy none the worse for wear, following her trip to the woods for dogwood trees yesterday. As I had declined a proffered gift in that direction a day or two before she left, she did not mention the matter again but asked me to indicate the places where she should have them planted. She said she got one each for Pat, Dan and Joe. Well, power to them. I promised to take care of the hound during her absence for I shall not see her before she departs for your fair city since she has an early appointment at the beauty parlor tomorrow and will probably return home only a short time before the party entrains of the R.E.A. thing and may the Lord attend their hajira.

James and Kay called last night after I had folded up. Among other things, they suggested breaking bread together this weekend. I couldn't find any free moments before Sunday night and so that was held as a tentative sort of thing. Early this morning, Mrs. Walker, whose birthday is on the 4th, -- Sunday, -- called to invited me for supper with the family at the Country Club on Sunday night. I lied and said I was all sewed up for that hour with the Registers but when she said she had in mind inviting them I said I didn't care how the business was arranged although I reckon she sensed I should have preferred remaining at home. She called back after noon and



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said she had contacted Kay during the morning and that Kay had accepted for herself and her husband. Well, I suppose the husband will mosey down this way on Sunday afternoon and pick me up and we shall probably proceed to town where we shall pick up Mrs. Genung and thence to the Wakers for a snort and thence on to the Country Club for supper and I'm sure it will all be very pleasant if, indeed, one must get into the big road.

Mrs. Walker told me when she called that Margaret Dixon is in Washington this weekend with the Louisiana queens and plans to get up to Natchitoches on March 24th, having in mind to stop off to pay me a call on the 23rd, I suppose. I suppose I shall go to town for whatever is arranged for the Editor of the Baton Rouge Morning Advocate on the 24th but I could do without that, too. As Kay will be in South Carolina then, I believe, perhaps James will serve as chauffeur or some such at the time but I can already see that New Iberia trip with Celeste is getting much too close and I am already getting cold feet.

It seems to me I haven't heard of so many people going to New Orleans for Mardi Gras this year although I suppose there will be about the same number before Fat Tuesday arrives. With the election for Mayor of the Crescent City on Saturday, requiring all bars to be close during voting hours, there may be a few less people abroad during the daylight hours but I have no doubt they will make up for lost time, once the polls close at 8 p.m.

I anticipated hearing the President speak tonight about atmospheric testing resumption and pushed the clock a little to be done with supper so I could make it in time. Everything worked fine and I headed for Ucca from the big house five minutes before it was time for the broadcast. Awaiting me on the gallery was James who had been working at the camp and we chatted until an hour after the President had gone into his act and so I shall try to catch a re-broadcast later tonight. He said Kay had been planning to stir up a supper party for Sunday night at the Country Club. He had not seen her since Mrs. Walker had invited her and hers to the same supper and so I reckon I shall hear more about that later tonight or on the morrow.

Celeste called about 7 to say she had agreed to let some ladies attending a pow-wow in town on March 10 visit the old plantation and as she would not be here, would mind taking her place. That would, indeed,

11654

Sunday, March 4th, 1962.

This afternoon Blythe and Miriam Johnson appeared. Miriam thought the thousand dollars asked for the staff room was correct for what they had paid for it 12 years ago. I personally would not enter the discussion, but I had no idea what position either the woman or Miriam had held and I had no idea what position either party might take. It was a pleasant weekend and withal fairly busy with people.

Juanita A. called Joe in Natchitoches, saying that her mother with whom she had been staying in Conroe, Texas, had died and Joe left for there sometime during the morning.

I did not have coffee at 9 as the lady had gone to town to get her perruque frizzed and Juanita B. called me along about that time to tell me of Mrs. Anderson's death and to ask if I would like to drive over to Conroe and thence to Beaumont for the funeral on Sunday. Of course, I declined but appreciated Juanita B.'s kindness. She must be one of the several people whom I have heard of who were shocked that I was forgotten in the Regard funeral. I never did see Celeste or J. H. before they left around 2 in the afternoon. I suppose I may have mentioned Friday night that Celeste called me around 7 or 8 to say she had bidden a State Convention of Catholic Women, scheduled for next Sunday, to visit Melrose and asking me with I would receive them. Natalie called me on Saturday and told me she thought there would be quite a crowd from all around to the Sunday doings and said she, Mildred and some other ladies would be glad to give me a hand at next Sunday's visitation if I wished. I certainly did.

Natalie asked me if I thought it would be alright if she invited James to speak at the college on some phase of literature and I told her I thought that would be fine but I doubted if he would accept that that it would do no harm to ask.

My old friend, Y. C. appeared at midnight, having arrived from Shreveport. He had been spattered with mud and wanted to get freshened up before going on to see his papa and grandparents off Little River way. He said he was going to try to raise two or three hundred dollars to pay a drunken driving charge instead of going to jail for six months. Everybody has his problems, it would appear.



11655

This afternoon Blythe and Miriam Johnson appeared. Blythe thought the thousand dollars asked for the stuff remaining in the camp was correct for what they had paid for it 21 years ago.. I, personally, wouldn't pay much for a 21 year old ice box but, naturally, I would not enter the discussion, maintaining that the business was between the would-be seller and buyer and that I had no idea what positions either party might take. Blythe said she had not come up the week before because she had had a letter from Sister, saying she was to be here and asking Blythe to come up and spend the week with her. Imagine.

Today was Mrs. Walker's birthday and on Friday the Walkers invited the Registers, Mrs. W.'s mama and me to dine with them at the bath country club tonight and we accepted. James worked at the camp all morning and came here to pick me up just after Blythe and Miriam had left around 4. On reaching the Register's home, James found the screen doors hooked and nobody responded to the doorbell. He cut the screen and discovered the house filled with smoke from something Kay had left on the stove. He felt a real fire would have been in order if there had been another 20 minute lapse before he got home. James had taken a sedative and forgotten the kitchen. While she was dressing, Dr. West of the Dramatic Section of Northwestern dropped in from her home across the street, bearing some home made Brownies. All the fans in the place were going but the place still reeked with smoke, an odd touch to receive visitors. Eventually the Registers and I picked up Clara Genung and proceeded to the Walkers where we had a drink and thence on to the Country Club. It was not a success as Mrs. Walker had an upset stomach and aside from not partaking, had to leave the table four or five times for prolonged absences. Clara was not present when the dinner was over and we said goodnight to our host. Clara asked if the Registers were driving me home if she might make the trip down the river, too, and so I had to take company back to my starting point while the Walkers, I suppose, proceeded home directly from the club. Clara said her daughter was working much too hard and wasn't surprised that her exhaustion should have upset her stomach.

Thus turneth the first weekend of the month and may all the March weekends be equally pleasurable.....

11656

Monday, March 5th, 1962.

Clear with blustery cold north winds with the promise they will subside before morning and we shall awaken to discover the thermometer in the upper 20's. I trust the new vegetation continues to prove itself impervious to cold.

One of my secretaries appeared at the hour of 8 this morning, -- unheard of but I was glad to make the most of the visitation against some unread letters of a couple of days back and because so many secretaries seemed intent on heading out for New Orleans by noon to be able to find themselves in the Crescent City when Fat Tuesday dawns. Well, may the Lord be with them.

Mrs. Anne Chopin of Natchitoches called me this morning to report on her weekend visit to New Orleans. She said for miles coming out of the city last night the highways were crammed with cars, moving bumper to bumper in the direction of the Carnival Capitol. If it was that way Sunday night, it is probably even more so tonight. Isn't it wonderful to what inconvenience people will put themselves, all in the name of a frolic.

A prolonged telephone chat with Carmen filled me in with her impressions of Washington. She thought the Louisiana Mardis Gras ball was a political business but didn't explain how or why she thought so. Perhaps it was merely an impression, but understandably enough correct if the majority of the participants except the Queens, were politicians.

Of the places she visited, she was thrilled by... everything she saw in the White House, finding it at once luxurious and in excellent taste. She admired the Lincoln Memorial and was a little startled when, finding herself momentarily alone in the great structure, having lingered behind her companions, a soldier spoke to her with a pleasant "Good morning, Madam". She said he was very pleasant but at first she had been slightly taken aback because he was colored and of course in Louisiana, he never would have spoken first. Carmen is getting an education, it would seem. She visited the Jefferson Memorial and was very impressed.



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The Lee or Park Custiss mansion at Arlington was not inspected but one viewed the changing of the guard at the tomb of the unknown soldier which was tremendously impressive. Neither the Capitol nor the National Gallery was viewed but when an hour on Saturday afternoon presented itself, a cab was grabbed at the Park Sheraton and directed to take the lady to the department stores which probably were more important than a mere national capitol or a National Gallery and, as I was saying, there really is no accounting for taste.

Mrs. Walker called to say how sorry she was that the hostess at the country club dinner faded from her guests. I know she has been laboring quite diligently in office and garden and I could readily understand how an empty stomach caught it from one mild drink. After all, my misadventure with Lionel Jeanmard's one bracer on a hot summer's afternoon still remains vivid enough in that section of my memory that was conscious and Mrs. W. was conscious throughout.

James just called to say that Kay had decided not to take her auto driver's license until she returns from The Bluff. I guess one must have to take one every once in a while if a former one has expired for. I recall she has driven back and forth across the continent enough to know how to manipulate a horseless carriage. James said that after yesterday's sleep that carried her through the cloud-choked house, it was felt she ought to wait a little before venturing out in a car by herself.

He sayeth further that I. S. Willard called on them this evening and that she is driving Kay to Shreveport on Wednesday night and will put her on the Charleston plane on Thursday morning. I must say those two gals certainly do hit it off wonderfully well and I am delighted they have each other.

interruption...an hour with I. S. Willard, reporting on her adventures on Saturday in New Orleans where she found hotel prices quadrupled and nothing by way of a room in caravanseries familiar to her. She accordingly at 10:30 at night discovered a bus was leaving northward on Saturday and caught it by 11 and so reached home by 7 on the morning of the Sabbath whereupon she went to bed. She saw Kay today and thought she looked rather more rested and so the girls go and so I must eventually fold up my beard and call it a day.....

11658

Tuesday, March 6th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and chilly. The thermometer slipped down below freezing again last night and the cannas look sufficiently "cooked" to suggest they will have to try all over again.

I talked with Juanita on the phone. --Juanita A. She said her mother's final rites went off nicely but, naturally, she and Joe and Pat and Juanita B. were tired enough on Sunday night on reaching home around 10, following the services in Conroe and the burial in Beaumont and the jaunt back to Natchitoches. I remarked, a little further along in the conversation, that I was trying to think up some way of getting out of a two day jaunt to New Iberia with Celeste before the month played out. She said she would love to be Celeste's companion if I could convince her that Juanita would be the ideal substitute. I think I cannot but I shall try mightily. Juanita A. said that Joe was getting over his mad which he has been directing at everyone during the past several months and she believed he would be seeking me out to express his regrets shortly. I wish he wouldn't bother. That particular breed of horse, once it has run away, may be expected to run a way again, whenever a whimse, known only to himself, comes to the surface again and again. Juanita A and B. are both so pleasant it is always a pleasure to chat with them.

I have been thinking about the conversation with Blythe on Sunday in which she manifested the same reaction I have noticed in other people which I find interesting and a little puzzling. There is something about her reaction to giving up the camp that parallels Carmen's giving up of the enterprise. She, Carmen, wanted to sell the Enterprise and did indeed do so to somebody who, in turn, sold it to the Beckermans and the latter to the Walkers and each owner in succession has been the object of Carmen's wrath. I should imagine that whether it were a newspaper or a camp or anything, if I had once been associated with the thing, I should have a sentimental attachment for it and a sincere desire that it might fare well in the hands of successive owners. But Blythe, like Carmen, seems to resent anyone else possessing what once was hers but which she of her own volition gave up. I have noticed this same reaction in so many other settings that I am wondering if it is the natural consequence of such transactions on the part of lots of



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people besides the ones cited above and I can only conclude it is  
some variation on the old theme of eating one's cake and having  
it, too.

In Sunday's conversation, Blythe said she had one point she wanted  
to settle in her own mind. She said she had understood me to  
say that James had done research work at one time at the Department of  
Archives in Baton Rouge. She said that Horace had made inquiries there about  
that point and the Department had no record of James having been on the  
staff. I replied that her husband, Dr. Rand, had told me  
on occasion that when in Washington he had done research work at  
the Library of Congress but it had never occurred to me to inquire of  
the Library of Congress if he had been on their staff, as, indeed, I was quite  
sure he never had and that the same went for James at the  
Department of Archives. I did not let myself ask the  
next logical question: Why should Horace want to consult with the  
Department of Archives if James ever had or ever had not been on the staff.  
It all somehow seemed part and parcel of the Carmen resentment against the  
Walkers simply because they chanced to be, not the next, but  
subsequent owners of Carmen's one time paper. I find myself  
wondering if there was something of the same curious  
twist of mind in the person of Miss Louise Butler who  
one day remarked to me at The Cottage that sometimes she wished if would  
burn down when she died, a statement that shocked me  
at the time as it then seemed to indicate she didn't want anyone after her to  
enjoy the establishment she had known. Perhaps there is  
a like element in the doings of some people who  
after having raised some fine fruit trees and later decide to move to some  
other habitation, cut down all the trees before leaving. It's  
a cock-eyed concept of human behavior, it seems to me and I can  
only puzzle at it without ever hoping to understand it.

Tonight's news reports include references to an old fashioned  
snowfall between Delaware and Massachusetts, suggesting that  
the Atlantic City visitors are getting a taste of climatic rigors on  
the seaside pilgrimage point. I am not con-  
cerned about them but I am holding the thought little Miss  
Lee isn't snowbound.....

11660

Wednesday, March 7th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and seemingly slightly warmer in spite of another  
freeze last night.

It was so delightful to find an air mail in today's  
post. I shall get to exploring it on the morrow  
before breakfast, I hope.

Three secretaries put in appearances this afternoon  
but somehow things ganged up against contacts although  
two had said they would wait but somehow got lost between  
the time I left the front gallery to hand Georgia Spinks  
to her car and the time I got back.

The lady called from town around 2, explaining  
she had driven over or down from Crockett to Northwestern  
to see about some summer school courses.  
her son, Johnny, wanted to consider. Finding herself  
in this area and wanting to invest in a primitive or  
two and say Howdy on this side of the fence, she inquired  
of the artist about available pictures and the artist said she  
had some for her to see. When she reached the artist's  
house, however, the artist explained that the pictures which  
were on order for some special customer, were to be viewed only  
and not to be purchased.

The lady reached here shortly afterward, bearing gifts in  
the nature of some toothsome homemade pickles,  
a pretty white shirt and a fine gob of home made cake.  
It was pleasant to chat a bit and to look a round a little.  
She found some gourds, the like of which she had not at home  
and was happy to add some and some seeds from tohers to  
her collection.

Even as yesterday, so today James spent all day at the can-  
where he is painting the interior. When I spoke  
with him yesterday, he confided he thought he would stay at the  
camp most of the time Kay is in South Carolina.



11661

The business about buying or building a house goes forward.....interruption.....  
Well, it seems while James labors at the camp, after having given up any thought of finding any property around town that would suit the lady, Kay goes out to find some likely site. She still favors a couple of lots along the river in the outskirts of Pecane Park, -- a situation I cannot imagine. At the same time, she has taken a four week option on the Williams house, that oldest house in town which stands across the street from the mainsonette of I. S. Willard. The old part of the oldest house is small but has had stuff pasted on right and left sides. Unfortunately, although the lot is wide, it has no depth at all, somebody in past years, having bought up all the rear section of the lot or two so that while the front lawn is adequate, one falls into somebody else's land as he steeps out the back door. The heirs of the late Mrs. Williams want only 32 thousand for the place, in contrast to the 16 thousand asked by the owners of the property further up the same street, but on the opposite side of the road, so that this 16 thousand dollar place with a substantial house has a depth of over 500 feet going down to the river. And so poor Kay continues casting about, having disdained everything thus far and seemingly ending up by settling on one or another property which most people wouldn't take as a gift. I don't blame for a single minute James' determination after his three months of concentrated effort, in letting the lady make up her own mind after she has done her own casting about.

If the above paragraph seems a little involved, consider three telephone interruptions including talks with James, Kay, I. S. Willard and Mrs. Walker in that progression.

And so the day turns and so must I eventually fold my beard upward and flatten out my hips in the bed. I hold the thought that things may be turning pleasant inside if not outside in the path of the current blizzard.....

50311

Memorandum: Cloudy and a little warmer with a little shower around 8 o'clock tonight and the hint of more in the offing.

It was so nice at supper to receive a greeting, transmitted verbally, from little Miss Lee, through the media of the merchant-planter and the clerk. It made the rest of this day so pleasant, realizing yawl had established contact alright, in spite of the inclement weather and all.

And next to the greeting via wire were the letters of the 5th and 6th, together with the informative clippings covering points of which I should never have learned, as in the Pierre Benoit matter, had not these particulars come to hand through your own good offices.

I was just as surprised as you when the matter of the dream about living in France came up a while back. I reckon life for her in any community would be a vast disappointment unless, by some magic I cannot imagine, she were able to do what she has thus far succeeded in achieving, -- extending the world of a twelve year old into a half century of maturity, forever ignoring the realities of life and refusing to admit but almost denying there is anything beyond the kindergarten department. Of course her initial survey of Europe was made from the isolated situation of anyone surrounded by a bevy in playful pilgrims, quite out of touch with the actualities of the region through which they wandered. And now the August jaunt will repeat that initial world of mental make-believe since, according to the local papers, the party which she will join for the August go-round will be comprised of thirty local residents, swirling



11663

through other climes without ever sensing things are the least bit different from the folk ways they left at the point of departure. The whole business is, of course, ridiculous but a condition which cannot be made clear to the victim of future disenchantment, refusing as such persons do, to accept as factual anything other than the kind of world the twelve year old child creates in a realm of dreams.

My day has been a busy one, tintured with minor interruptions that left the whole panorama something like a screen shot through with a thousand holes, none of which presented a particularly unusual interest. I worked with Fugabou at gardening and accomplished quite a lot. Around 4:30 James appeared, after having spent the day at the camp painting. He remained for supper and came back to Yucoa for a little chat. There were numerous interruptions, including plantation neighbors asking if they might bring visitors from afar on the morrow, etc., etc. Along about first dark first one secreted away then another appeared and when the last put in an appearance it was dark but I had to send them all away since I knew not how long my guest would remain although it is true he did depart shortly after the last one had put in an appearance and I had sent him away, knowing nothing of my guest's plans. I really needed someone to help me with a flock of addresses but perhaps I can work that in on the morrow. James said he had left home this morning about 8 and as Kay doesn't usually get under full sail until 10:30, and as she and I & S. Willard planned to proceed to Shreveport thereafter, he knew not how they had made out. I suppose I shall have considerable entertaining of the husband during the ensuing two weeks at least. I can manage it alright but I must say, as you have noticed when you had prolonged visitations, the usual routine is certainly knocked silly as one adjusts one's own programs to fit the convenience of others. And now I must do a few things in anticipation of Martha Robinson's visitation on the morrow and eventually call it a day.....

11695

Memorandum:  
Cloudy and pleasantly warm.

It has been a busy day, inside and out, and withal some what long-ish.

I had a couple of strong arms to give me a hand all morning and one this afternoon and much was accomplished by cutting of bamboo and hauling out of same, spading and heaven knows what all.

My agents reported James as being at the camp most of the day but I did not see him and if he came at close of day, he probably sighted me still bogged down with people. He will probably call me later tonight.

The unpredictable Martha Gilmore Robinson in stead of stopped here on her way up from Alexandria to "atchitoches, went directly to "atchitoches and lunched with Thelma at the President's residence, although, as I learned from Thelma tonight, Martha and her daughter, Mrs. Dick Plaster, arrived at Thelma's after lunch and after the servants had departed, leaving it to Thelma to play hostess and prepare luncheon at one and the same time.

84 85 86 Naturally the mother and daughter arrived here late, as  
87 I had predicted she would in my letter to her. She looks  
88 older than when last I saw her and seems possessed of about  
89 twice as much vim and vigor. She is always very kind,  
90 in spite of the fact that she had many pictures to take and  
91 much chattering over the coffee Pughou prepared  
92 for us and over a dab of sniah port she brought me.

She wants to come back in late summer, following



11665

a European jaunt that will take her to Athens, the Grecian isles, Rome and a tour all around Spain and Portugal, with emphasis on the castles in Castile and historic spots around Toledo, Cordoba and on into Andalusia. Somewhere amidst all these journeys, she plans to attend the wedding of the daughter of the King and Queen of Greece to a grandson of Alphonso XIII and Isabella. I remember Alphonso is dead but can't recall is the ex-Queen of Spain is still living or not and I didn't ask. She can tell me about all that after she gets back.

Among the other unexpected things and invariably follow in Martha's train was a camera, belonging to the Kysers which Martha picked up inadvertently when gathering up her duffle on leaving Thelma. She asked if she might leave it with me and I told her I should be glad to return it to its rightful owner. When I 'phoned Thelma, I thought the latter was going to swoon when she learned that John's pet of all cameras was missing and she hadn't realized it. She threatens to come down to pick it up before Monday. I hope she comes Sunday to give me a hand in shepherding the flock of Catholic biddies I shall have on my hands.

While Martha and daughter, Anne, were here, the mulatto, George Lewis, living on a plantation down the river, called to ask if he might bring some people from Syracuse to see the place. He had called twice during the morning but I had put him off each time, waiting until I could be done with Martha. I told him six o'clock would be fine and he arrived at six with his two guests, and, as always happens in mulatto appointments, half a dozen other river residents. None of them have ever learned as yet that three or four get more hospitality than 7 or 8. But we had a nice time and time marched on so that it was after dark before they were gone.

I hope I shall get caught up on my mail before long but I seem a little laggardly about doing so but perhaps I shall have better luck on the morrow. And so things turn and so must I turn and get on with some little chores before beard-folding time.....

11666

Showery this morning and yesterday, dazzling, but I am sunshine in the afternoon and whial cool.

Memorandum: I am sleepy tonight, not from too much labor but from countless interruptions that cut down on my Saturday night's rest. There were a many of bad little problems, looming large in the minds of section busy plantation folks, that required attention as between time for the Saturday night frolic at the honkey-tonk to be gin and sun up on Sunday morning before most of them were ready to call it quits and collapse. It was still dark this morning when I had to advise on whether a doctor should be called or not for ailing field hands and after a couple of more requests for aid, I finally decided I might as well get up and get going in anticipation of a visit by the Catholic ladies, scheduled for this afternoon.

When Natalie called a day or two back, offering to lend me a hand and perhaps bring Mildred Cunningham to help guide the ladies if I wished, I remarked that I could handle a few easily enough but that I should be glad if she and Mildred would come if the number expanded. She said 16 had registered for the visitation and, naturally, I said I could manage that readily enough. Natalie called me this afternoon, immediately following the luncheon, advising that, --incredible as it might seem, the ladies were actually running ahead of schedule and that they had already left town at 2:30 and therefore would probably reach here shortly. She said she believed there were three cars and I told her I could manage whatever three cars might hold.

I journeyed to the gate to find more than three cars, the group numbering half a hundred plus two priests and a Bishop. Fifty people in the library is too many at a time if anyone wants to see anything and fifty ladies in my boudoir inspires me to believe that even a Sultan might find his harem crowded if fifty bags converged on him all at one time. But we got along alright and I



11667

enjoyed chatting with Bishop Greco again and meeting one or two of the pilgrims although in such a group, requiring guidance and general diversion, one doesn't get much opportunity to devote too much time to any single person.

It was pleasant to wave them goodbye eventually and to turn toward home where, along the way, I encountered Thea and John. Fortunately, they were in the same frame of mind as I and, although I am sure they had not been up to the same thing as I, all three of us were glad to collapse and mull over a glass of port. We had quite a pleasant session, taking Cousin Eugene Watson and his Colonial Hatch toches apart and just as they decided they had to leave and were driving away, James drove into the yard across the fence and by his presence offered some more stimulating conversation before we found night coming on and it was time for us to drive to town to partake of some fine food at the hotel, prepared by Alberta Randolph, a former plantation gal from the Magnolia plantation. James had supper with the clerk and me on Saturday night and later at Yucca he mentioned having received a call from Thea on Friday night. It was from Kay, of course, letting him know of her safe arrival. There was an amusing interlude in that conversation when I, Storm got on the wire, obviously to add a drop of confusion to things. James said just before the call came in, he had been died of reading "Almost Goodbye" and the interjection of I la Storm was almost hello. She opened up by saying she had just learned from Kay of the great palace he was refurbishing on Cane River and before she could go further a faint voice of the other lady could be heard exclaiming, "Oh, Bill, why do you say such things..." Kay reported that Farley and Irma were arriving at the Bluff yesterday and would remain until the 22nd when they would journey on to Manhattan. Carmen dropped in Saturday afternoon while James was here. She had driven down to pick up from the artist the replacement of the things Madam Beaufort had carried off a week or two earlier, things that had been expressly made for Carmen's order.

And thus a new week begins and another Sabbath draws to a close and my guess is that I am going to find it easy enough to journey off to dreamland in just about two seconds from right now.

11668

Monday, March 12th, 1962.  
Fair and cool.

The postman was ahead of schedule this morning and just by chance I encountered a secretary by the front gate when I was returning about 10 o'clock from the store where I had picked up Friday's airmail mail from little Miss Lee. Thus I was able to read it and provide myself with a fine concept of the Lyme interlude when, half an hour later, I had to return to the store and, along my route, encountered the merchant planter going in the same direction. "he folks were just back, he said, and hastened to say no end of delightful things about little Miss Lee whom he obviously thinks is a grand person."

After discharging my business at the store, I re-crossed the road and dropped in to see the lady across the fence. She wasn't exactly but almost what has been described as being "all to pieces". She was complaining bitterly about the whole trip, saying there was only one bright spot and that was her brief contact with little Miss Lee. To cite how miserable everything had been, she said it was unbelievable but in Atlantic City, for instance, during the storm,--and nobody could really imagine this, they simply had to wait for almost 40 minutes at the theatre before getting a cab to take them to the hotel. Imagine. And while imagining such a thing, try to keep in mind that this vast inconvenience was imposed on one who apparently has nothing to do. She went on to explain it was impossible traveling with anyone belonging to the family from which her husband sprang, etc., etc. In brief, the twelve year old was enjoying a tantrum of sorts, not unlike the one usually put on,--always to my mystification,--when she has been presented with something like a new Cadillac, a trip to Europe or some such. It was



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so pleasant to step out of doors again into the sunshine and trying to get in tune again with any one of the billion harmonies that God seemed to have filled the world with this morning was so wonderful having had such a splendid report from Lyme and to be able to return to it later in the day. I am especially glad little Miss Lee had an opportunity to meet some of the people making up the hejira. I see Iruy Hott every once in a while when he passed by the office and sometimes pauses for dinner or supper. I find him invariably pleasant and I can't complain too much if he probably inclines toward hill-billyism since he hails from Ashland, La., which is pretty close to Briarwood.

I am glad, too, that you had an opportunity to meet Clothilde and Lester Hughes. As you know, Clothilde was born a Prudhomme, a niece of Lestan, the diarist, in fact, and in her person demonstrates the pleasant manners and the lack of gray matter most of the present generation display. They all fit in so nicely with that group, including our across the fence associates that adores cards almost as much as road running and somehow forever succeeds in avoiding anything by way of a serious thought or an interesting idea. God, having made them, went a step further in His wisdom, and placed enough of them in sufficiently close proximity, the ones to the others, as to provide the dandiest kinds of times for the whole bunch.

James did not get down today but he just called; having no news in particular but plenty of tomfoolery he had encountered in the newspapers. One of his pet delights of the moment is the fact that the Shreveport papers bear the notation, I guess near the masthead, that in Shreveport the paper sells for 10 cents and that beyond the city, as in Natchitoches, it sells for five cents. If a customer picked one up at the office of the paper, it would probably be priced at 15 cents. If one could but sell such a selling price notion to the New York Times, their circulation around the world might increase by leaps and bounds.

I know not where I was when I put the period to the last sentence and the phone rang, --Natalie calling. She wanted to inquire about yesterday's pilgrimage and report that you had been so wonderful about sending her a clipping concerning the death of L. Hern's son which had utterly escaped her. So glows thy crown and so I add my own Amen.....

11670

11670

Tuesday, arch 13th, 1962.  
Memorandum:  
Clear and cool all day, following last night's low of 30.

The merchant-planter left in the afternoon for Texas, Mexico and Guatemala by car, saying he would be back in a week. The last time he headed out on such a jaunt, I thought it was the height of folly but this year I'm inclined to think the rigors of the journey, although just as telling, might be less than those he might experience, were he to be at home.

I was not wearing pads on my shoulders this morning when I made the rounds for the 9 o'clock brew but I should have been well advised to have done so. The theme song was but definitely: "Nobody knows the troubles I've seen....." The little girl was having a dandy time for herself. Among the complications I liked best was the miserable realization she could not put herself in the hospital for a rest because there was the Country Club luncheon and general frolic for the balance of the day. One of her most intimate girl friends in town called me this evening to ask what is biting the lady and remarking that everyone is so puzzled that she should be performing in the manner she is, what with all the things she has any segment of which all the others would rejoice, were they in such a favorable situation.

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11671

In spite of the amount of time spent out of doors today, I seem to have spent some time on the 'phone and one of the rumors from that quarter has to do with a report that a certain drug manufacturing concern has gone bankrupt. What makes such a rumor circulating freely is based on the fact that the aforesaid drug company was or is said to have been the foundation of the fortune possessed by the lady whom Charles Cunningham married a year or so ago. It is said when she sold her interests in the concern, she did not take the 8 million it was supposed to be worth but, to save income tax, took small payments to run over a period of years. How much she got out, of course, is nobody's business but let us hope she got enough to enable her and her husband to continue the way of life they have come to accustom themselves since their marriage.

James dropped in around 2 this afternoon. He had painted himself out of the camp and will probably attack the outside next. I took the opportunity to send in to town by him the radio which needed some adjustments in the dial. Need I say how wonderful it is to have the little one to hand so that I may keep up with news programs regardless.

The enclosures are of no moment but I send them along regardless. It goes without saying that in pursuance of the advice from Mrs. Spinks that Mrs. Millspaugh was heading out for Texas and that I might take the opportunity to journey over Crockett way, I contacted Mrs. Millspaugh to say "Thank you but No."

The letter from the Kansas lady speaks for itself. One is forever discovering column readers in such unexpected places.

Miss C. Briarwood Dorman had an article in Sunday's Shreveport Times, I guess it was. In any event, I enclose it and I must drop her a note to express the hope she will do a flock of these, along with the sketches which I think are quite nice.

Just by chance today, I mentioned to James something about the fact that rs. Walker had remarked to Kay that she was counting on her being back in town by the 24th so that she and James could attend the Walker evening for the Baton Rouge Morning Advocate Editor. Kay must have forgotten to tell James about the party and I was glad I mentioned it. I am holding the thought the lady in Lyme is something getting a chance to catch her breath these days.....

11672

Wednesday, March 14th, 1962.

Memorandum:

March weather for sure. High winds all morning, sprinkling at noon degenerating into soft snow this evening, with the snow, fortunately, melting as it touches the ground. The temperature will not go below 37, it is said, and thus the snow will do no damage, I hope.

I saw the lady from across the fence who returned from town by mid morning. She said she was returning to town but thought she would return home tonight. I concluded that for tonight, at least, I shall not be master of the hound, and accordingly I left the child's supper to the care of the mama.

J. H. called from Brownsville reporting chilly weather on the Rio Grande. The travelers expected to be in Mexico City where it will probably be cool, too, on their second day out by car. What four fully grown men can get out of such a jaunt as they are taking, I cannot imagine -- 800 or 900 miles a day, going no where and rounding up exhaustion only, it would appear to me, covering countryside familiar to all of them and apparently not in pursuit of any business. Either they are wonderfully wise or I am inordinately dumb and obviously somebody must be off the track.

Pat called me this noon to ask if he might bring down the Presbyterian preacher. The man's name eludes me although I should remember it since he has been in town for a couple of years although I had never met him.

Well, he came and he and I did a tour in the r. in and I liked him very much. He liked the cats very much and they seemed to like him and so everybody was happy all around.

He said the sight of a black cat invariably reminded him of his Army adventures in the Southern Pacific. On one of the pulverized islands taken from the Japs by the Yanks, the soldiers found in a heap of rubble one lone, newly-born little tiny black kitten, its eyes not yet opened. The boys decided they ought to adopt it and they did, feeding it on their rations of powdered milk and so on.



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kitten traveled with them from invasion to invasion,  
island to island and obviously thrive on  
the gentle care it received from these  
modern-day crusaders who had lots to do but still could find  
time to bring up the kitten properly.

Then came the day when the troops had to make quite a long  
haul from their latest island conquest to another  
that required transport by naval vessels and  
of course the cat went on board the boat with them. Somehow,  
because of the time required in making the trip, the cat got  
bored and began exploring the vessel on its own hook and when  
it came time for the soldiers to debark, they couldn't find  
the kitten whose curiosity had led it into some of the shafts  
serving the ventilation areaways that only a cat could get through.  
And so the soldiers consulted with a band of sailors permanently assigned to the ship and  
they agreed to watch after the Army's pet kitten and how the  
animal fared after that, nobody knows.

It has taken a lot of self-control for me to restrain myself  
from preening my feathers until this late in this memo for today I  
became a grandpa but of how many children, I know not.

Just as the snow began falling a round 4 o'clock I heard  
some peeping from the direction of the duck's house  
where a bantie had been setting of late,  
evidently preferring ground level for such  
operations to the amir tops of the other expectant ladies.  
I should have had to stand on my head in the mud to explore the  
darker recesses of the duck house at that hour, for night seemed to have settled down by three o'clock  
in the wake of the snow clouds. And so I told myself  
them a bantie knew more about attending to her little ones than I and  
accordingly I hurriedly prepared some food for mother and  
children and a shiney pan of water, placing both platters  
inside the house and closing the door just in case, through error, a  
duck, at long last, should decide to enter the place, attracted  
by the pleasing aroma from the banquet thus prepared.

I shall be impatient until another dawn rolls round and  
I can count the number of little ones and chide the other, setting banties that they  
are mighty slow in their undertakings....

11674

11674

Thursday, March 15th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Damp under foot, fair over head and withal cool.

The plantation was resting, all save the hogs who worked  
diligently during the morning, rooting up bulbs, cannas, butterfly  
lilies all over the gardens until I eventually caught up with them.

The lady across the fence appeared much happier, --  
almost beaming. The change of viewpoint was due in part, perhaps,  
to the fact she was having a party for her girl friends tonight  
and there seems to be much illumination around and about.

J. H. was supposed to be at El Prado in Mexico City and  
will be driving to Guatemala on the morrow. Everybody  
seems to be doing what he pleases including Lestan who is simply  
staying put.

As for enclosures, they speak for themselves, including Robina's  
reference to the time Gertrude Roberts Smith who  
drove the car slap through the big old wooden road sign without  
doing any damage to anything except the sign, a huge affair, through  
which she drove the car with Miss Cam, Robina and herself in it.

The letter from the wife of Dr. Hines of Alexandria presents  
an interesting thumbnail sketch of the old days which aren't so  
old after all. Just as I had finished reading her  
letter yesterday, the phone rang. It was  
my neighbor down the river who had brought the Syracuse  
people, Mrs. Hines, etc., for a tour last Friday evening,  
following the Martha Robinson visit. My neighbor said he  
had just received a call from Mrs. Hines, explaining that she  
was entertaining New Orleans guests on Saturday and  
would like to bring them for a tour of ye olde  
plantation. I responded negatively for Saturday



11675

is always dizzy enough without adding pilgrims to the tangle. Then, too, I thought Mrs. Hines was pressing her cause too quickly in the wake of last week's visitation. I have plenty of appointments for this weekend but I could never explain that to anyone not living here since the impression is general by out-siders that all I have to do is sit around waiting for somebody to show up to help me kill time.

I was up to my hips in one thing or another this afternoon when Father Calahan honored me with a visit. I am always glad to see him and we had quite a pleasant chat. He departed about 3:30 when James appeared, bringing back my radio he had carried to town to have repaired for me. The bill was only \$2.50, the smallest I have ever paid for having anyone tinker with a radio and I shouldn't be surprised if James had absorbed some of the charges.

James remained for supper and then came back to Yucca with me and I guess it was after 8 before he left. I haven't tried out the radio as yet but shall try to catch the news at 10 o'clock. I recalled his prediction when Kay headed out for South Carolina for two weeks when this evening he mentioned having heard from her and that she would not get back for the Margaret Dixon party on the 24th. There is no question about it, these constant runs to the Bluff are engineered by Aunt Willie. I find myself wondering, however, if Kay doesn't become sort of an approving partner insofar as absences from Louisiana provide an excellent excuse for putting off decision as to which property she will buy in the Pelican State, whether a house will be purchased or one built and so on and so forth.

I have a few letters to write before calling it a day and awaiting me as a midnight snack, --tomatoes, belle peppers, celery, cottage cheese and so on, a real personal compensation for too many energies frittered away during the daylight hours....

11676

Friday, March 16th, 1962.

Memorandum: Fair, a little warmer but still cool enough for a jacket.

Two birthday parties and a frolic at the honkey-tonk knocked out secretarial assistance this evening but I shall be loaded down with a plethora of same on the morrow. In the meantime, the letter from Lyme reposes in the armoire against the morrow and I shall be the happier this weekend because of its presence.

I shall, after finishing this memo, leave it open so I may insert a post script tomorrow morning, should there be anything to add regarding the health of the merchant-planter. He phoned from New Orleans this afternoon, just before Celeste was about to take off for the weekend retreat. He reported a doctor in Mexico City had said he had better get out of that high altitude as quickly as possible and accordingly he and one of his traveling companions, Henry Lemoyne, had flown to New Orleans and were taking another plane from there to Alexandria. He asked a car be sent there to meet them and on learning of that, Celeste gave up the notion of the retreat and decided she would go with the driver to Alexandria to pick up the patient. I saw her a few minutes before she left around 6 o'clock and was impressed by her calm. She apparently didn't mind giving up the retreat, remarked upon the folly of the Mexican-Guatemalan trip and that was that. I assume the patient must have been rather ill in Mexico City or the other traveler wouldn't have felt it necessary that one of their number accompany the ailing one on the plane trip. The call from New Orleans was made by J. H. himself and whether he saw his former doctor in the Crescent City or not, I wouldn't know.

I have never comprehended the pattern of doing things by any member of that family and, naturally, I haven't understood the definance of all usually accepted admonitions over the years and therefore should expect to make anything out of the present status or why one should put himself in such a situation. I hold the



11677

thought, however, that the sudden departure by air from  
the others may have served as a protection against  
the balance of the 800 mile a day jaunt that had been  
planned to run into the middle of next week.

James spent the day at the camp. He has a couple of  
helpers going over the outside of the camp with steel  
brushes in anticipation of slapping green paint on the outside  
beginning tomorrow.

The Chamber of Commerce is requesting from  
The Enterprise a folder of some kind or other carrying  
a Cane River Memo. When I was asked by the paper for a suggestion  
I expressed the thought that the one that was contrived for  
last October's Pilgrimage might be suitable,  
containing as it does the column about the most  
widely known contemporary character in the Parish, together  
with a likeness of her patting inside Ghana and a picture  
of the outside of the place. The suggestion was considered  
alright and that is probably what will be used.

The scraps of news coming to hand from the radio fill  
me with delight when reports of the success of  
the Peace Corps seem to be so overwhelmingly favorable.  
One report remarked upon how many Republicans figure  
in the overseas operations, suggesting that  
the effort, like C. C. C. of F. D. R. days, takes  
on a non-partisan nature which is certainly all  
to the good.

I find myself being glad that St. Patrick's Day  
comes on a Saturday this year and as I hold the  
thought that little Miss Lee doesn't have to venture too  
far into town, she will escape the usual confusion that  
too often dominates mid-town on the 17th of  
March. I suppose few people

found the confusion of the inevitable parade on that day  
as inconvenient as I always did but, regardless of  
that, I am glad it comes on a weekend and not in the middle.

I hold the thought there may be lots of peace  
both in Lyme and locally over the impending Sabbath.....

P. S. --Saturday morning.....

11678

J. H. was at the store before any of the plantation  
was astir this morning. Celeste left early to join in the  
Catholic ladies and their retreat down Alexandria way. She will return  
Sunday evening. Everyone says J. H. looks pale but he  
maintains his gaiety of spirit, explaining that his  
traveling companions got tired of him and sent him home.  
It is felt he should not be left alone and so, unless  
some other arrangements are made, I shall make it a point  
to be within ear shot while Celeste is in retreat.



11679

11679

Sunday, March 18th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and mild. It was, thank Heaven, a quiet weekend and everything seemed to turn much as usual. The patient went through his accustomed day and seemed as bubbling over with a thousand interests. Of course he dined at the big house on Saturday and I always like that. With Celeste in retreat, he and I dined alone across the fence this noon and conversation was ever so pleasant. As the retreaters were coming home about 5, I went on to town to dine with James, leaving husband and wife to compare weekend notes together.

I laughed at myself this morning when, after doing a flock of out of door chores, I decided a round 10 to give myself a shampoo and a bath and don some fresh raiment. I like to do my shampooing in the tub and had my topknot well soaped and my body a-drip when the phone rang. I dashed from tub to boudoir and discovered George, the gentlemen down the river who had brought la Hines and company last Friday a week back, on the wire. He had called a day or so before, saying Dr. and Mrs. Hines had friends from New Orleans visiting them in Alexandria, and wanted to know if they could make another round here. My response of negative. And so this morning, George was calling me again to the same purpose. Again I said No and returned to my tub. Two minutes later another call, and another pool began forming at my desk and again it was George, saying Mrs. Hines wanted to chat with me. We chatted and in spite of her plea, again it was No. Back to my tub, I began lathering up with vigor when the phone rang a third time. It was George asking if it would be alright if his party came and just a walked around the place and not invading the houses. Again it was No and again I climbed into my tub and, miracle of miracles, I got out before the phone could ring again.

On the next time, it was Giles Millsbaugh, asking me



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if I had heard a fire had burned up the Methodist Church in town. I hadn't. Two or three other calls came in and then I went to early dinner, expecting to do some work before a 2 o'clock appointment with Mrs. Pool and party. J. H. appeared at my door at 1 and said the ladies had arrived an hour early and asked if I would take them on then. I would. James who had been supervising several men working on some construction business at the cam, came around 4, wanting me to see how his work was progressing. I went over and found the interior quite delightful, --yellow walls, gray floor and Bynog carvings, painted jet, placed at vantage points against the yellow walls and it certainly did look spiffy. We journeyed to town around 6, paused in front of the Walker home where we dumped out some boxes of banana roots but did not pause to see anyone and thence to the hotel where we had a delicious meal, --including a big bowl of cream of mushroom soup, a spicy salad, chicken dumplings that were wonderful, spinach, English peas, sweet potatoes, ice cream, ice tea and so on. The chicken dumplings had been made to special order placed a couple of days earlier. The bill for two was \$2.60 which is so ridiculous that we began figuring that Mr. Johnson who owns the hotel and half of Natchitoches is smart on making tons of money in some lines of endeavor but is bound to be equally gifted in losing money on his restaurant dining room. I bumped into Joe in the gardens on Saturday. He apologized for his recent mad. Naturally I dismissed the whole thing as inconsequential but I am remembering that a "horse running away once is likely to run away again".

Kay advises James she is returning next Sunday, thereby missing the Saturday night party the Walkers are giving for Margaret Dixon and so things turn.....

11681

11681

Monday, March 19th, 1962.

Memorandum: I am writing this memorandum to you about the weather in Alexandria, for some strange reason still puzzling the Weather Bureau by being the coolest community in the State.

I developed the sniffles yesterday and that has persuaded me to fold up my beard early tonight, I hope. I have some rather good patent medicine that is a big help and a dose of it and an extra hour of being flattened out tonight will probably bring me forth on the morrow as fit as a fiddle. I probably would have done just as well to fold up during the afternoon but if I failed to appear at supper, I would automatically get so many visitors, especially from across the fence, urging doctors, hospitalization and such like that it is easier to keep moseying about and hop into bed as soon as dusk settles down.

My 9 o'clock coffee hostess reported great satisfaction over her retreat. She explained that on Friday night she had really given up the idea of going but on "Saturday morning, after he had gobbled up his breakfast", she didn't see any reason why she shouldn't go and so had departed. I thought the word, "gobbled" was quite revealing. She mentioned catching a glimpse of I. S. Willard leaving the retreat just as she was entering on Saturday morning. As the retreat didn't start until Friday night, I. S. W. must have made quite a brief, possible token participation. She has not been sighted in Natchitoches over the weekend so perhaps she journeyed back to South Louisiana or to some such.

Thelma Kyser called me this morning, saying she wanted to read me a book review appearing in the Alexandria Town Talk last Friday. The subject



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of the books seems to be a novel. The title is "Summer Dancers". The author is Clyde Miller and the publisher Macmillan. According to TownTalk, the subject matter and characters are fictional as are the place names but the review goes on to say the locale is obviously Melrose. I remember Clyde Miller somewhat vaguely. He is, at present, teaching at Hunter College, Manhattan, it is said. Haven't encountered anyone as yet who has read the volume so have no notion as to its merits.

I'm glad the French and Algerians have decided to bring a halt to their 7 year war which, like the American Civil War, should never have been prosecuted in the first place. Perhaps with the Algerians and the French now on the same side, the secret army may be brought under control. It always seems to be that nobody profits when the military takes a hand in making policy and the outrageous doings that have been going on in Algeria seems to be a case in point. After the secret army has been put out of business and the Algerians attempt going it alone, they will probably discover that independence is bound to be pretty rough going for such a poor country but, if the philosophers are correct, "it is better for them to have what they want than what is good for them."

In another aspect of scuffling, I witnessed an angle I had never viewed this afternoon when two bantam roosters, a red one and a dominique, got to going in a knockdown and drag-out bang-up. There was nothing extraordinary about that but what astonished me was that the white guinea, a rooster, kept rushing in between the two contestants when they would get locked into each other's clutches. I suppose birds of the same specie might join in a free-for-all but to see a somewhat aggressive bird of another race assume the role of peace-maker was something new again. Back and forth the white guinea kept sallying in between them apparently taking sides with neither but simply trying to get them to let up in their battering of each other and how the business ever ended, I know not, having been called away to supper while they were all three still going it..

11683

Monday, March 19th, 1962.

Post Script:

Sometimes circumstances beyond our control get into the hair as, for instance, when one has in mind the selection of a birthday gift. In the present instance, for example, there is the desire to select something by way of a bit of duffle in which to carry things. To reach an emporium where such things are dispensed is one problem and then to see something in the nature of what one wants is another. Thus, when I heard Natalie was going to Shreveport last Saturday, I asked her to make a selection on my account for little Miss Lee. She was very generous about welcoming the opportunity to render a service for both parties and thought the suggestion excellent that the car bear the name of the sender as "The girls at the office" or such. Rather later than is her custom, she 'phoned me tonight, saying she did, indeed, find something on Saturday she thought I would feel little Miss Lee would find to her liking and that was that, --except that then she wanted to join with me in offering the gift which, of course, was just fine, too, except that it in a way defeat my hope of getting something on my own hook through the shopping service of another. And so the gift, when it comes to hand, will be from Natalie and me, it seems, and although arriving pre-maturely, I hope it bears no end of good wishes from two bubbling over with affection.....



11683

Monday, March 19th, 1962

Postscript:

Sometimes circumstances beyond our control get into the way of things. One has in mind the selection of a birthday gift. In the present instance, for example, there is the desire to select something by way of a bit of buffing in which to carry things. To reach an agreement where such things are discussed is one problem and then to see something in the nature of what one wants is another. Thus, when I heard Natalie was going to the airport last Saturday, I asked her to make a selection on my account for little Miss Lee. She was very generous, about which I am sure. The opportunity to render a service for both parties and thought the suggestion excellent that the best of the name of the sender as "the title of the office" or a such. After later then it was decided, she "phoned me tonight, saying she did, indeed, find something on Saturday and thought I would feel little Miss Lee's love. I find to her liking and that was that. --except that then she wanted to join with me in offering the gift which of course, was just fine, too, except that it is in a way delayed my hope of getting something on my own hook through the shipping service of another. And so the gift, when it comes to hand, will be from Natalie and me, it seems, and although arriving pre-maturely, I hope it bears no end of good wishes from me and my bubbling over with affection.....

11684

11684

Tuesday, March 20th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The weather is no account, drifting back and forth from sprinkle to drizzle and drizzle to sprinkle and withal warm, thanks to a mild breeze from the Gulf. Last night I thought the Weather Man said Spring would arrive this morning at 9:30 but whether it did or not, I shouldn't be able to say. Noon news was psuked aside for a baseball game and tonight I didn't hear anyone over the major networks have anything to say on the subject.

I didn't see my neighbor at 9 o'clock coffee time as she had already gone to town. Rumor has it that J. H. is contemplating going to Mayo's. For people who like to travel, living in this area, Roches er has at least one virtue, it being quite a ways away. I hope it has other advantages, too, but just what these are, I wouldn't know at the moment. Perhaps Mayo speaks with more persuasion or more authority and for that, I sincerely hope. If not, however, such a trip would seem somewhat pointless since all advice about slowing down given by specialists in other places has always been ignored if no disdained. One can but marvel that smart men so often incline to be so foolish about matters pertaining to their good health.

When talking with Natalie last night, I asked if she or the family had had any news from the C. Vernon Cloutiers, currently at Mayo's. She said they had had plenty and none of it was promising. I believe somebody talks with Madam Beaufort every night but I am not sure that would be very enlightening. It seems that one of the bones in the vertabrae is gone and the other next to it is going. It is said that a further smash up of adjoining ones might occur at any time, should the patient forget to sit down with care or make an unguarded move. Mayo's recommended that Vernon be brought back home in an ambulance but Beth told them a thing or two, stating that they were too proud to have her husband brought home on a stretcher. Imagine. One gathers that Vernon is living on borrowed time. Whether Beth has accepted this fact or not, nobody seems to know. There son, it is thought, will have to be put in an asylum before long. Their debts are said to exceed three hundred thousand and I know not if Beth still plans to head out for Jampan on the 24th of this month or not. It's all so haywire.



11685

As I turned the page, the 'phone rang.--  
I. S. Willard. I don't know where she has been hiding during  
the past couple of weeks. Celeste mentioned  
having caught sight of her leaving the retreat about  
the time she arrived but she vanished again,  
heading into some of the more remote Parishes, I  
suppose. She reported a couple of hilarious adventures  
and she related the details at some length but throughout  
the recital, she as moved to such merriment that I  
could catch only her laughter and never did get  
the point of either tale. Then I got to laughing  
at her mirth and both of us had a great time although  
neither knew what the other was giggling about. She occasionally  
consults me on gardening matters but I fear I am  
of little assistance to her. Because the extent of her  
planting is confined to limited space because of the  
smallness of her lot, she naturally inclines  
in the Dornon manner of stressing tiny plants which  
register not at all in my general scheme of things  
but I do what I can by way of imagining her horticultural  
problems although I fear my help doesn't amount to much.

She reported having had a note from June and David Nixon  
who have taken a place on the Grand Canal in Venice. They  
had intended going to Paris after a round in Greece but  
decided on Venice until things get quieted down a  
bit in France. It seems to me  
they have a house in Paris but I suppose they probably rented it  
during their recent sojourn in Florida and New Orleans. I know not if the  
went to Greece hard on the heels of their visit up this way during  
the October Pilgrimage but one has to travel as  
much as they do to keep up with them as they aren't much  
on letter writing.

Tornado warnings for the Northern Louisiana area were  
called off about 4:30 this afternoon when a  
parade of thunder showers advanced eastward, doing no damage  
in the Pelican State but tossed a few houses around  
across the Arkansas border. The mention of Arkansas reminds me  
I haven't heard from Miss Cordell of Eldorado in some time and I  
must drop her a note. I sometimes think I ought  
to arrange for her and Hobina to meet for their common enthusiasm for  
the Shreveport Times ought to give them something in common  
to enthuse about, don't you think so.....

11686

Wednesday, March 21st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and comparatively mild although  
it cools off too much at night to  
encourage vegetation to unfold as fast as it  
does sometimes.

I was glad to receive a report from the  
wood carver today. Napoleon has been in the  
hospital since Monday. He is approaching 80,  
is quite large around and has been suffering  
from an impossible blood pressure. A couple of  
days in the hospital was enough to establish when he  
needed by way of diet and so on and accordingly  
he was released today which made everybody glad  
for a whole flock of reasons, not the least of which is  
because his return to his nephew will afford Andy much  
relief from worry.

Saturday's program, revolving around  
Margaret Dixon, is beginning to take shape  
but a shape that is a little uncertain around the  
edges. She drives from Baton Rouge on Saturday afternoon  
where she will pause to call on a niece. She doesn't know if  
her niece will come with her or not when she heads up  
Cane River way. It is thought she will reach here  
about 4. Mrs. Walker suggested she  
would be glad to come and meet her here  
but I discouraged that notion since I want  
to keep the number of people as limited as possible  
at this bend of the river. The point of the visit  
is an interview with me and interviews get farther,  
it seems to me, if there aren't too many nieces and  
friends about who have to be entertained. James  
is coming sometime during the afternoon to pick me up



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and his services will be appreciated following the party when it's time for folks to wend their way home. The Walker party will be held at 7:30 and, although the Weather Bureau speaks of showers, fair weather is being counted on to hold much of the doings between the Walker residence and the margin of the river some hundreds of feet away. The guest list tends to stress political over-tones because la Dixon knows many a politician, and these will include Lester Hughes and wife, Earl Morris and wife, Albert Fredericks and wife, representing local and State politicians. And John and Thelma will be bidden on the theory that chit-chat may reveal educational ties with the political set up, and the Friedmans, --Sylvan and Liz, since Sylvan is said to be slated to run for Lieutenant Governor on the Russel Long ticket on he next go-round. My sister's opinion was asked about including the local merchant-planter and wife but I discouraged that because I know that J. H. doesn't like to attend parties and especially on weekends. Natalie and husband will not be invited since they have never issued invitations to the host and hostess. With the schedule so uncertain as between 4 and 7:30, one will probably skip food until party wheels are turning where meat pies and a salade will sustain those who haven't grabbed a bite before.

James passed this way in the middle of the afternoon, having finished painting the camp and being withal delighted with the assistance he has had in doing the job inside and out. He meets Kay in Shreveport on Sunday evening. By phone she reported she is going to buy several lots across the river from Pecane Park, a site that seems to recommend itself to her only. One thing is certain, she has had an opportunity to look over everything in the Parish. Like everybody else, I suppose, Kay's imagination expands in some directions and contracts in others and I think it a pity she doesn't lean more heavily on James' insight as to property potentials as a satisfactory dwelling place....

11688

March  
Thursday, April 22nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and a little on the chilly side. The thermometer hasn't heard what the calendar is saying about Spring.

James had in mind dropping in at his camp this afternoon but was somewhat taken aback when he discovered that the tractors ploughing the adjacent cotton field, had done such an expansive job that they had carried their efforts right over to and including the road leading to the camp. And so he came over here for a visit instead, after stopping by the store to see what could be done about making entrance and exit to his new domain possible.

Neither of us had much news but we did speculate a little on Saturday night's party, deciding it might be a good idea to sup a bit in town before going on to whatever refreshments might be set forth when the guests appear somewhere between the house of the host and the margin of the river at the far end of the property. I have long been a believer in nibbling on a snack before attending any evening party. Perhaps I ought to do a column on the subject sometime for, to my way of thinking, it offers several advantages. For instance, it saves a guest from dying of starvation if refreshments are served late-late. It offers the partygoer an opportunity to assure himself of getting something he wants to eat in the event the host's supper turns out disappointingly. Not the least, perhaps even the most important element in such a custom is the provision it affords the guest already pleasantly filled, to be polite about diving into the host's food and thus be able at the same time and appearing leisurely gentle to



11689

avoid giving the impression to other guests and the host and hostess that the real reason for attending the reception was something other than find a free lunch. I am thinking of two ladies I have known at different times who were forever explaining they were taking a dab of this or that home with them because their pet dogs would simply adore the stuff whereas in reality the poor things didn't know where they were going to round up food for themselves on the following day and neither of them had any pets.

Juanita A. called me today to inquire about getting some ivy for the new home, which kind was more suitable, how one planted same and so on. She mentioned the possibility she might get down this way tomorrow and I suggested she make it in time so she might break bread with us. She said she would try. For the last three nights, the merchant-planter has been skipping supper, --at the big house. It was all attributed to dieting which I have no doubt has been the reason. Over the coffee cups this morning, however, Celeste mentioned that she and her better half had gone to town to a dinner at the Broadmoor where, from another source, I learned interested citizens conferred about getting natural gas piped through this area on some sort of cooperative basis, not unlike R.E. A. Who ate what food, if any, I wouldn't know.

I have long been so far out of touch with what contemporary schools are teaching that I was only mildly surprised a while back when I learned that the names of subjects have been so altered in recent years that the students don't seem to know what subject matters are being mentioned when one employs terms used a couple of decades back, and I, on the other hand, don't even know from the names currently applied to subjects just what the particular course may deal with, as rattled off by students. I guess the local schools must be studying something about local history, but under what name, I wouldn't know, although twice in the past couple of days pupils have passed this way with notes from their teachers, asking me for data on the names of places, ante bellum characters in the area and so on.....

11690

Friday, March 23rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and moderate as to warmth with a promise of nothing about higher thermometer readings just ahead.

My 9 o'clock hostess this morning seemed quite good spirits but complains about the pressure of things on her time. She mentioned she wanted to do the stations of the cross but could round out only half of them at one time, what with a card game waiting and all but she hoped to get back to finish off the stations somehow. You can see readily enough just how rugged things can get everybody seems to be busy in fact except the lady doctor who is said to be on a week's vacation, perhaps at Bilezi, with her husband and child. Following an interlude in California or Arizona or some such place, the husband returned and the family hit on the idea of a vacation. Perhaps the vacation was for the lady doctor. Carmen says she thinks the lady doctor needs one. In her opinion, the lady doctor, aside from working so strenuously and trying to maintain some sort of a balance for her husband is at the same time inclined to be jealous of him in regard to the child's affection. One takes Carmen's reports with a grain of salt but everyone agrees the lady doctor's nerves are on edge and as much as they have been for as long as I have known her. I find it remarkable that persons like her and J. H. can be so smart in some respects and so short-sighted in others.

And so the Warsleys will not be at tomorrow night's party but there will be lots of other people. It is said by the hostess that the row is more political as time goes along. The latest aspiring Congressman from this District is a Long who has been living in Washington but has recently established a residence in Alexandria with a view to becoming a candidate for the seat in the House of Representatives, once occupied by George Long, --the same seat, in fact, to which Earl was elected, following his fling at the Governorship, although Earl died just after he was elected, --some say a day or two before the ballots were cast, and so he never occupied the seat. I believe the new Mr. Long has been bidden to the party.



11691

James didn't get down to the camp today and perhaps that was just as well since everybody directing the plantation forgot to have the ploughed up road put back in order. I brought up the matter to the merchant-planter this evening and he promised to give directions to have the job undertaken tomorrow morning. Procrastination in one or another line of endeavor too frequently characterizes a plantation where acreage is so extensive and lines of endeavor so diversified and far flung so that such a matter as a camp holder, ploughed out of my access to his camp is put off from one day to another for the sheer convenience of plantation doings while the legitimate desire of the holder is left to cool his heels until somebody remembers or somebody else decides there's nothing else in particular to do. I shall make it a point to be in the midst of things tomorrow before all the paraphernalia of plantation assignments gets distributed in other directions than the ploughed road.

I got quite a laugh to myself last night when I. S. Willard called to ask me something. What made the matter mildly amusing was the fact that she forgot what she wanted to ask between the time she dialed and I answered which must have been at least 30 seconds. In an unguarded moment, I mentioned that it had had been reported Mrs. Kennedy was visiting the Shalamar Gardens, built in the same reign as the Mahal although I didn't know how many hundred miles apart the two projects. I have to be careful about saying such things if there is likely to be information in any book I. S. W. chance to possess without giving me an opportunity to scream "Please don't" she will drop her phone and dash off in search of the topic during which time of her absence, I get to laughing louder at my own folly in ever bringing up any such point that might, by the wildest stretch of the imagination, seem to require immediate settlement. I am quite sure the impulse to assist me in my quest for knowledge but often I am not casting about for that but merely carrying on a conversation. Kindness is the sole mover in such instances but the lady plies me with so much nourishment when I'm not very hungry that I am bound to take greater care in conversation.....

11692

Sunday, March 25th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with a chill east wind, a few sprinkles and one good shower during the night and that was the weather for the weekend.

All in all, it was pleasant although there were one or two attributes that I, pretending to be civilized, would have had a little different.

I. S. Willard called me at 7:30 Saturday morning. After 20 minutes of beating around a bush of uncertain genus, she advanced the news that she had a couple of important St. Bernard Parish people in town. I guess St. Bernard is down New Orleans way. Bethat as it may, they had expressed the hope to get down this way and although she had explained she thought I might be too busy to receive them, she would see about it and perhaps they could at least walk around the gardens. They said they weren't interested in the place but wanted to meet me. Imagine. Well, I said I was too busy to see anyone Saturday morning but when she indicated she felt as though she should, for some reason, extend them a favor, I gave 'way' a little and said it would be alright if they came a little after 9 and asked if theyre would be just the two southerners. She changed her tack on that and said that actually she would have to come with them but she thought I would find their personalities exhaustive and that, errrrr.....ah.....oh.....um.....etc.....etc....., she herself didn't feel she could get away. In short, I gather, she felt as though she must appeal to me in their behalf but hoped the Lord I would respond negatively. This sort of thing when on for hours and finally it was decided they would make it again sometime by her telling them I couldn't see anybody.

I received a call from Mrs. Walker, saying that Margaret Dixon and niece would arrive at Melrose sometime between 2 and 4, the niece living in Alexandria and driving a la Dixon up here, pausing here and thence on to Hatchitoches. When it got nearly four, I began hoping James would show up to take the niece off our hands, in case an interview developed on la Dixon's part. James arrived promptly at 4:15 and at once we decided we would most assuredly dine in town before the party. At 5:15, J. H. sent the cook over here to invite James to join us at supper. I made motions as though eating something but didn't and explained



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James was going to an appointment in town. at 6, Mr. Walker called to say Dixon and niece had arrived and that Mrs. Walker was bringing them down here. They arrived around 6:30 which was first dark, thanks to the heavy storm clouds. Margaret brought me a record of excerpts from Earl Long speeches and I found the meeting pleasant withal but not satisfactory from my point of view as too much time was spent by la Dixon who seems determined to persuade the General to make a foundation out of Melrose. As the party was scheduled for 7:30, their stay here wasn't extended, after which James and I journeyed to town, dined and thence to the party about 8:30 where I saw a lot of people, some of whom I knew and some I had never seen. Lester and Clotilde spoke particularly of little Miss Lee and that was pleasant. I had a nice chat with Thelma and John, the Friedmans, the Sheriff Morris team and so on. Just as we were leaving a lady spoke to me and it was, --no other, --I. S. Willard. She was one of about half the people present, none of whom I had bumped into.

It was warm inside the house and in spite of the large concourse of human beings scattered about, somebody had had the unhappy inspiration to light a big log fire in the fireplace of the room I chanced to find myself. I was nearly passing out with the heat. James brought me home immediately. I had not seen him during the party. He said the biggest kick he got out of his adventures was when a determined matron approached him with outstretched hands, exclaiming:

"It's good to see you, Senator", and after the first pause, took a piercing look at him and apologized for her gaucherie, explaining she couldn't see well without her glasses.

Before leaving for Shreveport this afternoon to meet Kay at the air port, James went to the hotel to get me a quart of pea soup of which he knows I am very fond and thence to the drug store to buy me two kinds of cold and cough medicine, bringing the same down here on my behalf which I thought very kind.

He was gone half an hour when Blythe and Joan put in an appearance. They both seemed find and brought along a May basket of sandwiches and things. They both seemed on the gay side and nothing resembling the word camp was mentioned. Saturday, by the way, the plantation put the road to the camp back into order and that seemed to please James, naturally, and thus the weekend has pattered along and may it have been as pleasant but less active in Lyme.....

11694

11694

Monday, March 26th, 1962.

Memorandum: A lovely day and enough warmer to suggest Spring might be on the way. Foolishly, I did not put padding on my shoulders when I dropped in for 9 o'clock coffee across the fence this morning. The result was that I came away somewhat dampened from the tears diluting the brew. My neighbor is feeling mighty sorry for herself and because of her husband's failure to express more affection for her. She reasons that since she can't do anything to make him happy and since by being with him, she herself cannot enjoy the happiness that is her due, she would do well to leave him. I must say, off hand, that among the more lamentable events in life is to be found in children grown old but still possessed of their childish impulses of which and the improving application of a great big hand, applied a few times on just about the right place, is unthinkable.

At noon dinner yesterday, I sensed a tightness of things when we sat down. A couple of gestures by the hostess in the direction of the host confirmed the sensation. A shrimp cocktail was served. The sauce was grand. I was under the impression the host had picked it up in New Orleans for the hostess because he remembered she liked it. One would think that commending the hostess on the excellence of the fare when it would be implying a left handed nod in the direction of the host as one expressed his own delight ought to make this pleasant enough all around but I was wrong. It only inspired the hostess to remark was a pleasure it was to have at least one person present, kind enough to mention a word of appreciation in a house where no appreciation by anyone else was ever dreamed of. How that made the speaker feel, I know not, but it must have produced little more



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delight on the part of the host than on the guest., etc., etc.

The absence of sunshine from the present memo may well stem in part from the news coming to hand from Lillian Harness, announcing the death of her husband, Carl, whom I liked very much. I shall speak of him in a later memo.

I. S. Willard called this evening to say Howdy. She said she had left the Walker party Saturday night with Clothilde and Lester Hughes because she had come with them but came within an inch of hopping into her own car when they let her out at home and then re-turning to the party where she was having such a nice time.

A third interruption, being a call from the Hampton Carvers, wanting to bring some folks down on Thursday. The chat touched on David Snell and his family. They have taken a place on Long Island, -- sixty-five minutes out, which must be near Montauk if traveling by plane or Long Island City if traveling by car. Be that as it may, it seems to suggest the Snells expect to be in America for a while at least.

Early in the day, -- about sun up, I bumped into Joe Henry at the front gate. He wanted some Giants Beard for borders and asked me how I thought it would look along his front drive. I said I thought it would look just grand in that particular place. I did not tell him I was speaking as an amateur so far as the situation mentioned was concerned. I have never seen his house in Pecans Park and hope I never shall. By the way, I guess I always spell Pecans incorrectly and I must inquire of someone if the final e is omitted. Joe wanted some lilies, too, but seemed astonished, as I believe he really was, when it dawned on him from something I said that there was more than one kind of lily in this world. He went off delighted with the Giants Beard and some narcissus bulbs, taking a couple of my helpers with him, the only ones I had, but they got back about 4 o'clock this afternoon, but obviously too exhausted to do much more than collapse. So turneth the day.....

11696

Tuesday, March 27th, 1962.

Fair and mild.

I shall be glad when it's even a little milder in thermometer readings at night for seeds don't do much by way of germination when 12 hours of the day is experiencing readings in the 40's.

A while back I asked Leon Mitchel, the nurseryman, in town to see about some candleabra plants for me for delivery at the proper time this spring. Some fine plants arrived Monday with the admonition that it probably would be better not to transplant them for a while until things had warmed up a bit. Last year I had a very pretty one at Ghana, about 4 or 5 feet tall, with clusters of yellow candle like looking flowers in groups of three or four at some levels and five or six at other places. I think it may have figures in one of the pictures in which the artist was in the foreground and Lestan further back. Anyhooo, they are pretty and I anticipate trying my hand at some more this year if and when it warms up a little.

Everybody was mildly surprised today when le pere Antoine, clean out of Tulsa, appeared unannounced. In summer of last year, he haunted the post office, hoping mightily he would get a transfer to some city, since he couldn't stand the boredom of the country. Eventually the transfer came, naming him to Tulsa where his old Polish friend, Father Wroble, has a church. Great was the delight of le pere Antoine and he could shake the dust of Cane River off his feet fast enough. I guess that was September and then he surprised everybody in mid October by suddenly putting in an appearance back here at the time of the Fair. He has returned several times since then and he declared today that he doesn't



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like city life and wishes he might return to the country. Like this or that other person we know, he really doesn't know what he wants except that it is always something different from what he chances to be possessed of at any given moment.

The air continues tense across the fence. The lady wanted a road of brick running from the cattle gap to her house. Several laborers have been at work preparing things for same and this morning they took my two helpers to haul brick from town to round out the required materials before beginning the actual construction this afternoon. J. H. went to town right after dinner and the workmen started their labors but the lady, catching sight of the brick to be used, abruptly halted the work, told all the workmen to go away and, jumping into her car, raced to town to denounce her husband. She never could track him down, however, and so I assume bricks are flying across the fence at a great rate tonight, -- a restful way of life for a man requiring as much absence of tension as possible.

James spent the day at the camp and passed this way while we were at supper where he joined us at table but did not partake as he and Kay were going out to dinner. He came over here for an hour or so after we had folded up at the big house. He said Kay seems in good humor and is interested in making plans for her new house in Pecane Park. I find it depressing to contemplate cases wherein the individual, possessed of money, is bereft of any sense of "grandesa" but just so long as anybody is getting what suits him, I can't think why I should complain.

I had a flock of people this afternoon, Mr. and Mrs. Aguilar from town with people from Kentucky whom Celeste had intended entertaining before her sudden flight into town. Some of Ada Jack Carver Snell's folks on the docket for Thursday and some other people for the morrow, all of which combine to pretty well gum-up my efforts in other lines of endeavor. Fortunately, the days are growing longer, giving me a measure of quiet in the post dawning -- ante dusk departments and thus the wheels turn regardless. And birthdays are in the offing at Lyme and I find myself wondering how festivities are shaping up as I hold the thought the impending weekend maybe ever so pleasant in that quarter.....

11698

Wednesday, March 28th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair, and, I am pleased to say, a little warmer. I'm hoping to do a little planting on the morrow if the thermometer doesn't sag again.

The merry-go-round continues to whirl and I find myself as always, -- understanding mighty little. I had been promised a helper or two for this morning but instead of giving me a hand, they came only to report that they had been delegated to do something about the rejected brick of yesterday and off they went. They did return at noon for a dab of afternoon labor but only a dab. Somewhere in the brick scuffle, they caught up with some fire water and while they weren't high as kites, they were too wavy to see a straight row and stick to it. Perhaps I shall have better luck on the morrow.

When dropping across the fence for 9 o'clock coffee, the servant reported her mistress had gone to church and would be back by 10:30 and that she had expressed the hope I might drop in at that time and have another round of the brew with her, Juanitas A. and B. and Jenny Cohen. I demurred, however, saying I had to see a man about a tree or something equally inane.

J. H. left early this morning by car for Baton Rouge on some sort of R. E. A. business, it was said. I suppose he will return tonight. Tomorrow his wife gives a cocktail party sometime in the afternoon. I shall have to see another man about a tree. Smile.

Two more town's people, one a friend of his, one of hers, called me today to ask how, in probably different ways, this couple could be slowed down. I explained I had known them only some twenty odd years, -- exceedingly odd, come to think of it, and therefore I didn't know the answer to the question.



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James came to the camp today but I did not see him. He had mentioned last night that he expected to bring Kay down to see the place this afternoon but she didn't appear, it is said. As she has never seen it, she probably has been urged to make a round if for no other reason than to observe what it looks like, now that her husband has put it in order. I assume he expected her to make a round since it is said he didn't put in an appearance down this way until considerably after noon but perhaps yesterday's plans had to be changed. My guess is that the wife will probably receive little more interest from the husband in the formulation and carrying out of the building plans in Pecan Park than the wife is showing in regard to the camp. I haven't a doubt both parties know exactly what is best for the other to do and I am certainly glad I am not consulted in advance about any of the positions taken by the one or the other for I am quite incapable of comprehending the pattern which is being followed and thus so far with a measure of satisfaction apparently to each.

I haven't heard from I. S. Willard in a couple of days. I had in mind to call her last night but changed my intention to call when James mentioned that in the spot check being made at random across the country on Income Tax I. S. W. had been notified her 1959 return would be examined which, one assumes, would put anybody into something of a tizzy and I thought it rather better to allow the lady every opportunity to concentrate on birds nests of former years without being distracted by phone calls.

I was glad to see Zelma this morning. She came to inquire about the health of the geese and to ask if Louella might be studying about settin'. Zelma says she has 20 eggs but her goose isn't dreaming about motherhood and so she is casting about to see if all lady geese are in the same frame of mind and, so far as I know, they are.....

11790

Thursday, March 29th, 1962.

Memorandum: Pleasantly warm with pleasantly partial shadows to assist the breeze in keeping the warmth just right.

I'm physically tired tonight and shall probably hear little news because of sleep, having lost the usual news broadcasts following supper.

Sister appeared as a surprise today. I believe she plans to maintain a visitation of a few days.

I had rounded up several hundred onion sets for the Ghana garden today, making an especial effort to get the sets as yesterday, although a little high, Fugabou was dying to plant something on the morrow. With the dawn's early light, however, Fugabou, although capable of making coffee, wasn't feel well enough to do other than go to consult a doctor in town about a strained back. The doctor, however, found Fugabou too drunk to get anywhere with an examination and so he will probably go back to town on the morrow. Thus, since he was absent, I set out the onions and tomorrow I shall probably also be without his services for one reason or another ranging anywhere as between two bottles to bricks.

I was weary at supper and left the place, determined to mosey home and, after listening to the news, plunge through a hot bath and then jump into bed. I got the news turned on just as James appeared. He said Kay was in the car and he had come in to ask if I would receive a caller, in view of the presence of other guests around and about. I would. And so they both came over and remained until after dark. It was today's visit to the camp that Kay got her first



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look at the place. She couldn't wait to tell me how delighted she is with it and with what enthusiasm she is looking forward to spending a lot of time there. I am glad to James' sake that she expressed delight with it for that must go far in compensating him for all the labor he has put into it. They invited me to dine with the in town on Sunday night and I accepted.

If I can round up a copy of the front page of today's *Nathicothes Times*, I shall send it along. There is a front page editorial by Charles in a box, blasting away at Mr. Walker and the whole thing is couched in intemperate language and does not a bit of credit to Charles. I shall advise the Walkers not to reply to it but I know not if my uninvited advice will be either welcomed or accepted.

I laughed in my beard this morning when Carmen called to confide in me that the Walkers had entertained for Margaret Dixon last Saturday night. She complained that she had known Margaret Dixon longer than the Walkers had and therefore she was amazed the Walkers didn't invite her to the party. This is the first time I had ever heard that because somebody knew someone longer than a person giving a party for some that automatically the oldest acquaintance should be invited. I didn't ask Carmen how many times she had invited the Walkers to her home whether they had known longer or shorter any guests she might be entertaining but I see no point in entering into that feud. It is rather surprising that *The Enterprise* did not mention the Dixon visit while *The Times* reported in a front page item that the lady had been to Melrose to interview me with a view to doing a story on me. I can't imagine how the *Times* got hold of that but assume it must have come from some leak at the *Enterprise* office.

Well, so the pot bubbles and so I am about to knock off a couple of letters and then flatten out against tomorrow's highjinks, whatever they may be.....

11702

00711

Friday, March 30th, 1962.

Memorandum

Cloudy, warm and humid.

Naturally my thoughts have been especially flowing in the direction of Lyme and how things were shaping up for natal day festivities. I began the concentration by casting about for weather reports concerning what was forecast but while I got several stations touching on various doings in the area, I never could track down any account of atmospheric conditions.

I was particularly delighted to find an air mail from little Miss Lee in the morning post but I am extending the pleasure of exploring its contents through the morrow when, it is hoped, there will be a departure that will enable everyone, including the secretaries, to return to some sort of a routine that inevitably gets thrown off the track whenever a whirlwind be-stirs the local setting. And thus it is that within my heart today, I have observed a natal day and on the morrow, I hope, shall be able to do so all over again, through the medium of today's message which I shall be able to absorb on the morrow. It goes without saying that I have been holding the thought all day that there have been no end of the measures of pleasures that have been little Miss Lee's all around the clock and that the new year unfolding will be among the happier thus far.

I had an opportunity to concentrate more than usual on aspects of happiness I was wishing for others since today was comparatively quiet and, for the most part, I was unencumbered by people. I could have



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made use of some helpers in the vegetable section but Fugabou is still remaining at home and I was not anxious to push planting with assistance from other quarters requiring a stack of instruction in the simple process of getting seeds into the good earth..

James was at the camp but I did not see him. He had offered to buy some more onion sets for me in town and had sent them over to me this morning. My agents reported he left the camp fairly early in the afternoon. I assume I. S. Willard is not in town and perhaps Kay I believe had seen and James decided on doing things together in undertakings that I. S. W. might have substituted for James, had the lady been about. I think whenever possible, the girls find great pleasure in getting together to discuss their mutual problems in domestic matters, what would be fetching by way of garments, etc., etc., and I think James is inclined to be rather indifferent to matters such as building sites, housing plans and so on so that the delights the two girls get in going into such matters receives the heartiest blessings on the part of the husband.

I was enormously impressed this afternoon when going to the store I saw a couple of houses moving up the road from the direction of the bridge. It seems somebody had purchased a couple of fairly good size houses down toward Alexandria, had picked them up on trucks and were moving them somewhere up the road in the direction of Bermuda. The trucks were escorted by police cars, directing traffic, which must have been quite a job on busy Highway No. 1 for some 30 miles or so before they turned off on to the Montrose-elrose highway. The houses were so wide they not only spread more than the width of the highway but also brushed against great limbs of pecan trees. They were two story structures to boot which made negotiating electric and phone wires a problem. It was all wonderful and tedious and inspired me to wonder what next will be attempted. But I must break off at this point, continuing my telephony in the direction of Lyme.....

11704

11704

Sunday, April 1st, 1962.

Memorandum: to the Honorable Mr. Lee, from the Honorable Mr. Lee, dated Sunday, April 1st, 1962.

Fail and chilly.

My weekend has been the happier, thanks to the dandy letter with enclosures received on little Miss Lee's birthday.

It is nice to know the natal day gift arriving last week turned out to the liking of the recipient and I know Natalie is as pleased as am I that her choice truned the trick so neatly.

I am so glad you mentioned the zinnia seeds for I always like to keep abreast with the flow of mail and my failure to mention their receipt would naturally lead one to suppose they had failed to come through. It goes without saying I am at the same time shame-faced and withal a little puzzled that the selection from your true hand did, indeed, come through in perfect order and much to my delight, not only because I shall always think of little Miss Lee every time I feast my sight on their colors but also because there seemed to be a shortage of them when I made several different attempts to round them up in this Parish. If memory serves, they arrived on a day when a secretary did not put in an appearance and I wrote a little note to be attached to my memo which I intended sending together as soon as I had absorbed the letter. Apparently I failed to attach the note or possibly I have it among some other papers in my folio that will require the further assistance of a secretary to help in going through. Be that as it may, may I at this be-lated moment say how happy I am to have the generous assortment of seeds, so doubly precious because of their origin and because I wanted some very much for my central circle at Ghana which would have been without them, had little Miss Lee, as always, anticipated everything.

What a business it was, having to cast about so widely to find somebody to use the extra ticket for the new Rogers musical. I am so appreciative of your kindness in giving me your personal impressions and for sending the New York Times review which gives me an understanding of full particulars covering this presentation. I am always so glad to be able to keep abreast with what goes on in the



11705

The weekend, as Thursday through Saturday, was the usual fandango, always present when Shreveport puts in an appearance. Of the varied manifestations of lightness in the head, one case is sufficient to cite by way of illustration. A little after 7 on Saturday morning, Sister 'phoned Dan's house in town, insisting Dan and wife and three or four children come down for dinner. Dan said he wouldn't come but his wife, June, said she and the children would. Sister reported immediately that none of those invited would come. Then, as we assembled to break bread, June and children appeared. The cook apologized for having to re-set the table, saying that had she known anyone was coming, she would have been better prepared. June said that she had told Sister that she and the children would come. Sister said that while June probably did say so, nobody could tell if she would or not and so she had told the cook they wouldn't. Sister departed in the afternoon and that was that.

Celeste learned a nephew of the J. Pratts, an interior decorator out of Shreveport, would be visiting them today. She thought it an excellent time to hook him to give suggestions for some upholstery and so invited the Pratts to bring him down this afternoon and at the same time, asked me if I would take the Pratts off her hands while she went into the business with the decorator. They were late in arriving and James was here to pick me up to take me to the camp where Kay was waiting. But the program went along alright and although the Pratts were again I was difficult to detach from Yucca, they finally got to the started, whereupon James and I proceeded to the camp and thence to town where we dined. James and Kay bringing me home a little after 9.

The editorial I mentioned which Charles wrote is enclosed. It is a piece of scolding rather than a letter, an editorial and its innuendo, half truth, falseness may be apparant, perhaps, even if one knows nothing about the point of the whole thing which is the attempt on the part of Charles to try to discredit the Walkers. As the enterprise did not mention the visit of Margaret Dixon, it is interesting that Charles put it on the front page of his paper.

It is obviously going to frost tonight and so, immediately on my return from town, although it was rather dark, I covered some of the more tender plants and took inside some of the potted plants before I called it a day. I shall be enchanted to learn how little Miss Lee's natal day was observed and withal happy, I hold the thought...

11706

Monday, April 2nd, 1962.

Memorandum: Carl and on the cool side with a heavy frost this morning that certainly flattened vegetables and plants of this year's creation.

I found a measure of pleasure over the coffee cups so far as mine hostess was concerned. She is planning doing the house over and declares she has given up all thought of a grand tour for this season. I can't imagine to whom she has been listening but somebody seems to have persuaded that traveling with 30 people isn't all that it's cracked up to be. She explains that she really couldn't go by herself as that would be too lonely but she doesn't want to go with 30. She went with 30 or more last time and everything was darling. Besides, the summer isn't over as yet.

By dint of no end of doings, I finally extracted the Belle canvas although it was quite a job. I have never taken off the cardboard wrapping from the pictures that were entrusted to my care in 1942 and I had no idea which of the several packages thus packed contained the desired item. I made several tries and hit the wrong thing although it was right in a way because I was glad to see the likeness of Simon Belle, the 18th century Court painter which, I believe is a self portrait and quite in the style of the dix-septieme siecle.

The place was in an uproar before I got all the stuff pulled out and pushed back, re-wrapped as they had arrived, and the desired item singled out and properly rigged up to give to a packer to have the thing boxed in wood prior to shipping.

I am delighted on two counts to have the thing ready to get headed for preparations for its journey to Manhattan, for, naturally, I am glad to assist the owner and, secondly, I am glad to have at least one of the items on its way for I assume it is of more value than the other things and the elimination of at least one thing reduces the space displaced and I must say Yucca has too long bulged at the seams with more stuff than I can say grace over.



11707

As I turned the page, Natalie called  
She said she was delighted for the sheer prospect of a trip  
that might never come off but she is at least going to  
have the fun of enjoying thinking about it.  
She said she had sold a house she owned in Minden and that  
R. B. had half agreed to make a 4 week trip to Europe with  
her in August, --Rome, Athens, Vienna, Paris and London, not  
to mention a stop over of a few days in Lyme on her return  
to compare notes with little Miss Lee. She mentioned  
having had a delightful letter from little Miss Lee and she seemed so pleased that the gift from the girls had  
turned out alright. She said she would let me know  
know further as to how plans for the trip, if any, felled.

The artist called as I was penning the above with  
nothing in particular to say but merely an impulse to  
to chat. In response to my inquiry as to whether she  
had seen Mr. Pipes today, she said she had not seen him  
pondered to "study about" and then, after mature reflection  
stated

"I sure ain't never done saw him today."

I have always liked the way she handles the past  
tense of see, --"never had done saw" being a phrase  
a phrase she employs so frequently and one that Pa was  
always trying to correct her about but which he never  
has been able to make a dent in her mode of expression.  
expression, praise the Lord.

Fugabou came to see me today. He is still too  
troubled by a "misery" in his back to work. If he would  
leave the bottle alone a little more, the back might improve  
a little faster perhaps. His brother-in-law, Atmas, the  
one time helper of the artist, and blade artist at carving  
up his brother a week ago, gave me a hand in finishing  
setting out the few thousand onions that remained to put in  
the ground to complete the onion motif in the hana garden.  
I was glad to get that department taken care of even though  
I'm not planting anything by way of seeds until after  
the frosts appear to have run their course. I must  
knock off a column before folding up my beard and I guess  
it might as well be about planting since I don't seem  
to have anything in particular to write about, at least  
least anything else, such as prelates and politicians  
fighting over school policy in New Orleans, which I shall let  
simmer along for a while before I take a crack at same.....

11708

Tuesday, April 3rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and still somewhat on the chilly side.  
Fits ad starts and stops and fits and starts all  
over again and more stops seemed to characterize my  
entire day which ended up with me being not very satisfied  
with what had not been accomplished. I did get some mustard  
planted, however, and a dab of gardening although the  
unexpected gaps that developed along the way left me  
feeling in no way satisfied.

In tonight's news I was interested in  
listening to a report by the Chairman of the Communications Commission  
or some such who in a speech provided copy for tomorrow's  
papers by pointing out that radio during the past year  
had developed the habit of having the announcers do  
too much whistling, screaming and shouting at listeners  
in their commercials in their frantic effort to buttonhole  
prospective customers. A while back I had written  
a no-account Cane River Memo under some such title  
as News With Noise in which I, too, complained  
about all the racket the news caster inject into their  
programs and as this column will appear on the day following  
the Federal Commissioner's criticism, the co-incidence  
seems a happy one in conveying the impression that  
the column may have been inspired by the Commissioner although in  
fact it was written weeks before the aforesaid gent  
sounded off.

James dropped in to see me this afternoon. He  
said Kay hadn't slept much either Sunday or Monday  
night. He said she and he aren't seeing eye to eye  
about either the location or the building of  
the new Hatchitoches home. It is interesting  
as a side light that Cousin Arthur who owned the four lots Kay



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11709

purchased jumped the price a thousand dollars on them when he learned the financial standing of the prospective buyer. James wants to continue living in the rented house. As he has done all the work in the New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Natchitoches moving, he is in no hurry to undertake another one right away. Kay, on the other hand, anxious to get a larger establishment and have Aunt Willie come and stay with them, which Aunt Willie will never do, is determined to begin building forthwith and James says she simply hasn't the energy to put into such an undertaking at the present time. He feels, and with a measure of justice, I believe, that he searched all over the Parish for sites and houses he thought Kay would like and took her to see them all and all of them she rejected and he accepted the rejection without a murmur. Then, without consulting his wishes, she hits on a treeless site, purchases same without consulting him and proceeds to make plans for building without taking his desires into account. In short, there is disquietude in their menage at the moment and how it will pan out is anybody's guess. Without ever dreaming about it, the person holding the purse strings seems to expect to call the tunes and obviously is surprised when the party of the second part doesn't slide right into the great waltz. I didn't sip coffee this morning, what with my neighbor being in town in the morning and in Alexandria in the afternoon. Among the afternoon interruptors was Mr. Hardini who passed this way to ask my assistance in an article he wants to do for a newspaper about the Easter Sunday riots at Colfax in 1883, April 13th, in which the cannon in the Melrose garden of today figured back three quarters of a century ago. I was glad to give him a quantity of data but I have my doubts if the article ever sees the light of print,-- in the Shreveport Times, at least. If Natalie is as smart as I think she is, she will be keeping quiet her plans for a grand tour and thus avoid getting a volunteer to swell the party to a threesome. And so the world jogs along and so I must get busy and do some desk work.....

11710

Wednesday, April 4th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and slightly less chilly but still too "air-ish" for April in this clime.

One of my difficulties in making adequate use of unskilled labor, sent by the merchant-planter to give me a hand at gardening stems from the fact that the aforesaid planter knows nothing and cares less about what goes on in the garden but, naturally enough as an administrator of labor, is primarily concerned about giving as many people during a week as much to do as possible when, in reality, there is nothing in particular in the field operations for them to do. The result is that Monday I got Atmos to lend me a hand in the vegetable garden, on Tuesday there was August, this morning it was Murphy and the identity of tomorrow's helper, if any, will be determined by sheer chance at dawning and not by any horticultural gift or training the individual may have had. Sometimes nobody shows up, other times half a dozen are turned over to me and my problem is to try to keep the person or persons appearing from running with a hoe what another the day before has accomplished.

There was another hazard to the vegetable section this afternoon, one that has occurred too frequently of late, --a bunch of porkers from somewhere down the road, invading the newly turned soil and making ducks and drakes of my fine efforts in accomplishing something by way of raising stuff in some sort of an orderly fashion.

One of these days Fugabou may give up the bottle for a while and although he may not be able to do much work himself, he may, perhaps, be able to keep his eye on the work of others by way of guidance and on the porkers by way of keeping them on the far side of the fence.

Sister Frances Jerome phoned this evening or this afternoon, around 3:30 or 4. She said she was just back from San Antonio and had in mind passing this way, should I chance to be free. I didn't so chance to be but my agents had reported



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James to be at his camp and as those two had never met, I thought the time ideal for Sister Frances Jerome to call on him unannounced which, later, my agents reported she did and I have no doubt they both had an enjoyable conference as both are interested in many a parallel problem in human relations and so on. James did not stop here when he left the camp. Perhaps he will 'phone later about his chat with the nun although he may relate his impressions on that score at some subsequent sitting as Kay is somewhat inclined to be a little prejudiced against priests and nuns, I believe. The Walkers have been invited to dine at the hotel tomorrow night with the Registers. The Walkers will like the pea soup which is on the menu but I doubt if they will have much to say in favor of the chicken dumplin's which I imagine they will be inclined to find somewhat flat but none of that will be my problem as I am not attending.

Today's post was rather meager and a sample of its inane quality may be found in the enclosure

As for my own efforts in correspondence, I was somewhat surprised at myself when, after our little chit-chat, I dove into the business of knocking off letters and ended up with a round dozen of same before calling it quits. I didn't get around to pen one to the boy friend, however, and there is no rush about that although I shall probably get around to attending to that later tonight. I am so glad that I have his picture ready for the carpenter to fashion a box and nail same up in with a view to getting it out of the way as soon as possible. The name Walker reminds me of the General by that name who made such a wacky witness in today's Senate hearing. All his fulminations about Kennedy communism seem to have fizzled out to nobody's surprise.....

11712

01712

Thursday, April 5th, 1962.

Memorandum: Cool with sprinkley weather all day, sufficient to keep one from working in the open but insufficient to give the earth much more than half an inch of moisture.

Natalie called tonight to say that she and R. B. are indeed going to do a whiz around Europe during August. They plan to fly to Rome on the 4th and get back in New York on September 4th where they will probably linger for a day or two and so get back for school by the 12th of September.

She said her daughter, Ann, had been trying to reach me for several days by 'phone but without any success. I have given daughter a few dozen rings this evening but always get a busy signal. I shall try a few times more between paragraphs and see if I can break through Ann's talk-a-thon.

Well, I finally got a call through to Ann. She said she had just discovered that one of her offspring who likes to play with the telephone, had left it off the receiver. What she wanted to talk about, of course, was the bringing a flock of young lawyers' wives down here a couple of Saturdays hence. I told her frankly I could tell more about that two weeks hence.

She apparently hadn't heard that R. B. is going with his wife on the Grand Tour and I didn't say anything about it when she speculated on the point.

I asked her about Mrs. Combs for now Ann is with the Welfare Department which Mrs. Combs had to leave because of illness. It seems rather remarkable that Mrs. Combs some time back consulted a couple of physicians to express the opinion that she was mentally ill and asked to be committed to a hospital for treatment



SIVIL

11713

of such maladies. The request was granted and she was away for some weeks or months but is back home again now but no longer with the Welfare Department. The Combs residence must be Bleak House because of the lack of harmony as between wife and husband and the shortage of money when the younger son wants to go to college and doctor bills for the parents have eaten up all the funds. As for Ann, she is delighted with her Welfare work and, in spite of a cold, is impatient for each new morn to roll 'round so she can get back to it. How her several children are growing up under the care of a colored servant, only the colored servant probably knows.

I did not hear from the Registers today and James did not get down to the camp. Tonight they are entertaining the Walkers and I'm glad there will be people to dine together since it is to be hoped that may lessen the marital tension momentarily at least while everyone dons company manners.

A day or two ago there was an exhibition on the lawn in front of Yucca that was at once unique and hilarious. Along about 4 in the afternoon one of the peacocks decided he wanted to spread his fan and go through the usual performances he likes to indulge in around 9 or 10 in the morning and between 4 and 5 in the afternoon almost every day. A gray squirrel chanced to be perched on the big old su ar pot at the time and when the peacock started saking out the great fan and getting it elevated, the squirrel jumped down from the pot and dambled along the greensward until he was about 4 feet from the bird. Then, keeping a sharp eye on the peacock, the squirrel copied the latter's doings by sticking his own tail straight up in the air and bushed the hairs out to produce a maximum of expanse. Still eyeing the peacock with attention, the squirrel would wag his tail back and forth and partially turn his own body with every movement of the birds and the resulting mimicry was really wonderful and as good comedy as I have witness in many a long moon. After 10 minutes, the whole show came to an abrupt halt when somebody came to see me and the squirrel ran up the old magnolia and the peacock took to the lower branches, unable, I reckon, to keep up with his little furred imitator.....

11714

Friday, April 6th, 1962.

Memorandum: Still cool and still cloudy. Just as I wrote the above date-line, the Registers called, asking me to go with them through some forest or other around here to view the dogwood blossoms on Sunday. I declined with thanks but opined it would be pretty to go almost any time, without or with dogwood feing, for it is said the forest is always pretty and I, selfishly, will see as much in deep summer of dogwood from a distance as I would in April.

I talked with both James and Kay and they both sounded happy as clams. They both said they had had such a pleasant evening with the Walkers and the Walker report on the evening was equally favorable. I had heard what James was ordering, --and I heard from Mrs. Walker today what he had ordered and I thought the pea soup would be grand but I had my doubts about the chicken dumplin's for those I have had from the hotel restaurant have tended to be a little on the flat side. But it seemed they turned out nicely as did the salade, --I hope not chicken salade, and the pecan pie was said to be quite or quite as pecan pie should be and so everybody was pleased about the whole business. I shall dine with the Registers on Sunday night.

The plantation wasn't working much today and so I got Fugabou and Atmos, both of whom have long been itching to do some planting. Accordingly I put them to work planting, --not vegetables, however. On the contrary, I set them to work putting gourd seeds into the ground and they were as pleased with that as w they would have been with vegetable seeds. I have the vegetable seeds but I'm not dreaming of dropping them into the ground until it gets warmer. As for gourd seeds, I have tons of them and if the present chilliness knocks out today's efforts, there will be ample supplies to draw on for another round or two.



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In anticipation of vegetable planting, however, I got busy this afternoon and caught several banties I wanted to eliminate before they discover the Ghana garden and learn there is something worth scratching for in that quarter. I only want a few banties anyway, -- Mrs. Murgatroyd, Mr. Hymen and one or two others and I know several people whose weekend will be the happier because of the pairs of banties they will be tending and the season is such as to enable people receiving their respective pairs to raise a flock of little ones. And so I considered the rounding up of my feathered neighbors an excellent stroke since my friends were getting what they liked and I was getting rid of just the super-abundance I didn't need.

My 9 o'clock coffee partner brought up New Iberia today. I was hoping she had forgotten same. I shall try pushing it back a while further on the theory she may eventually forget it altogether. March was the magical month for the trip, it was felt last autumn but somehow arch got up and away before anyone remembered and now I am holding the thought that many another month may slide along before anyone thinks of it again.

Returning to the Register conversation, in my chat with James, I mentioned that Kay had just asked me if I had heard from I. S. Willard, saying she had tried to reach her by long distance in Baton Rouge and couple of time but had just missed her in each instance. James said he thought he had seen her car in front of her house last evening. I asked what about suggesting she dine with us on Sunday night but James said he felt we three would probably hit it off more neatly since, after a week's absence from town, there would be so many Robin Hood barns to go around in the conversation that dinner might get lost in the doings. I think he has a point and it will be just perfect if the two ladies can hit it off by themselves at a private session and nobody will even have to think about bread-breaking.....

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Sunday, April 8th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and cloudy about half and half and continued cool during most of the weekend but tonight the clouds have vanished and the coolness increases into the 40's.

Sister and her contingent from Shreveport put in an appearance in the afternoon. She seemed to be on exceptionally good behavior and as things progressed, I began wondering if the company manners were being displayed for the benefit of a certain Mr. Galoway, or some such name who figured along with the 8 or 10 other people.

Mr. Galoway had to be singled out to accompany the lady on little side excursions to see how some particular plant or what not might be doing off behind this or that building and before the posse left, Mr. Galoway had to go to the store with Sister to speak to J. H. In short, I felt intuitively that Romance was budding and may the Lord help the afore-said Galoway.

James came a few minutes after they had left, bringing a fine bottle of port from whose presence, man and bottle, I need to draw strength. Perhaps 20 minutes after we had started to revive ourselves, I had to answer the phone. It was Sister calling from somewhere, asking if I would do another tour on Sunday for other people she knew who weren't able to make it Saturday. That was easy since she was not to appear with them and, indeed, did not.

On Sunday afternoon I was glad to see Luther Harrison, after the Wenk assortment had departed. Luther is B. Randolph's brother and we had a chance to chat a little about how James had



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secured the local camp before B. and Gordon Randolph had been able to apply for same. Luther had another sister with him and we made a little go-round, during which we encountered James and it was all ver pleasant talking a bout things in general and the camp in particular. After Luther and sister had left, James and I went over to the amp where Kay was waiting for us and the three of use drove to town for supper. At the table it seemed to me I vaguely sensed something burning but attributed it to something in the culinary section. Well, to make a long story endless, when we returned to the car and were about to take off, I asked James to hold everything until I could descend in the open and discover what kind of a strange bug was biting me about the ankle and lo! I discovered that about 3 inches of the cuff and the same extent of the pant itself had burned away from a cigarette that must have been tossed from a car as, on our way across the street to the hotel for dinner, we had had to wait until traffic stopped. By one chance in a billion, the lighted cigarette must have landed in the cuff and been smoldering all during supper, subdued withall, and that was the end of that section of my pants.

The Walkers called tonight to report on a weekend spent in press conferences in Alexandria. They gave som interesting figures about economic aspects in Natchitoches Parish where bank assets have dwindled from 20 to 16 millions lately. he population is dwindling, too and in a recent draft call of 30 men, 28 were found to be living in California, Illinois and so on. I laughed when one day last week, some race bigot offered a free bus ride to any colored people who wanted to migrate to Chicago while at the same time a group of Mississippi and Alabama ladies were wringing their hands because they couldn't find any colored help to run their menages.

In Saturday's Shreveport people's tour, Sister cooked up a new tale about the artist that was astonishing. In looking at the African House murals, the people were told by Sister that when the artist started out painting, she had no brushes and so she, the artist, pulled out some of her hair, and made same. For Sister's information, the artist hasn't had dry hair for the last 40 years.....

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Monday, April 9th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and although it was supposed to be chilly, and it wasn't. When we returning from town last night, we could see an electric storm sliding along toward the southeast and I reckon the cold front was accompanying it, as often happens, slipped off into a southeasterly direction without getting down this way.

It was so pleasant to find a letter from Lyne in today's post. I was enchanted at the opportunity to start right in on exploring its contents and got as far as the first paragraph when the first interruption developed. I started to resume an hour later, only to encounter another interruption and from that point on I ran out of secretaries and so shall have the pleasure of resuming the letter on the morrow when I remove it from the armoir where it is resting tonight.

By good luck I escaped the dinner party being held across the fence tonight. The participants in the erican visitation of last month are being entertain along with their wives, not to mention one child of the J. H. Williamses and one of the Henry Lemoynes, or it must be two of the latter since 11 people in all were expected to grace the boards. I guess one board is enough and so the s on the word board may well be eliminated. The gentlemen present, I am sure, will talk money and the ladies will talk parties, I suppose, and what the children will talk is up to them. The hostess did remarks over the 9 o'clock coffee this morning she was hoping to listen to the Hollywood Oscar presentations tonight so perhaps the gathering will not last too long. I shall probably do what I can to tune in on the doings for I like to keep up with such business even though the titles of the pictures receiving awards are merely titles to me and ed of the names of the people receiving them are merely names.



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With the cold spell scheduled for this area having faded, and rain promised for later in the week, I made up my mind it was the magical moment to plant some vegetables and some I did, indeed plant, --okra and such like. While in the midst of the doings, H.'s driver appeared, saying he had just brought the boss back from town and the latter had sent him over to bring me some plants, -- one bunch of tomato plants, one of belle pepper plants. I was touched by the gesture and impressed by how little J. H. knows about the quantities needed for the Ghana garden where I shall set out hundreds of such little plants as opposed to the dozen or so in the bunch he sent. Several years ago, somebody told him that a single tomato plant ought to produce enough tomatoes to satisfy the needs of a single household and somehow he has always retained that silly notion. As for the Ghana garden, it supplies not only two households within the gardens but countless others across the plantation, smaller in measurements but greater in the numbers of inhabitants and I relish a fulsome garden whose stocks are ample and not dependent on what one measely plant might produce.

I neither saw nor heard a peep out of the Registers today. They were expecting to entertain Lawyer Brumby and I suppose his advise would be asked on the final decision as to the purchase of the Pecan Park lots. I shall be curious to see how that matter is finally settled but I must confess I hope he frowns on same and that Kay takes his advice.

As you may have noticed in the letter from Martin in yesterday's post, the Rocket when last seen didn't appear so well or remarked on not having felt up to par or some such. When her birthday rolled round, I dropped her a little note, congratulating her on her anniversary and addressed it to Old Bonita but I don't know if she is in Texas or Peru or where but I hold the thought her health may not be slipping for like my neighbor across the fence, she puts such a strain on her health and she can scarcely afford to permit herself to be under the weather. I am impatient for the morrow to resume little Miss Lee's account of her natal day doings which I trust held many a pleasant shaft of sunshine.....

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Tuesday, April 10th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, warm and breezy with a little sprinkle tonight and the report of a tornado or two skipping to the north of us on an east-west line while a racket of static going on at such a great rate that I could get only snatches of news from any quarter and none at all from most directions.

It was so pleasant being able to absorb the letter of little Miss Lee, as of Friday last past and thus glimpse some aspects of how the natal weekend turned out. I am sure it was pleasant to be able to compare notes with A. and M. regarding summer doings but I can readily understand your observation regarding visits whose advents have not been proclaimed. Nothing gets into my hair more, especially when I have collapsed for a quiet go at things, only to have the peace shattered by an untimely visitation. The literary planned by your guests sounds quite promising and I hold the thought little Miss Lee may be able to realize something equally so.

I, of course, had heard nothing about the Brentano sale and am indebted for the information for one naturally follows the career of such institutions with interest. From other reports passed along from time to time, I have gathered the fortunes of that institution have gradually gone down during the past decade or two. Let us hope the organization may take on a more vigorous existence. For as long as I have known of its operations, I have always felt there was something basically wrong about its entire system that could be remedied if someone with capital and imagination took hold of it but so far as I know, no such happy combination ever did exert itself on its operations. The trade name itself should have been worth a million but, so far as I could ever see, nobody ever made any use of that asset I never knew if there was any relation between the New York and Paris house so far as management was concerned but I always felt the Paris organization was more sturdy than the New York one.



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Kay and James are entertaining Pat and Juanita B. and James at the Country Club tonight. James purchased some plants for me in town today, peppers, tomatoes and so on. I had quite a lot of work to run through with a secretary but as he arrived just as we were finishing little Miss Lee's Friday letter, I got no further in desk work. I was glad to make the most of the opportunity to recommend that the lady be taken to Hot Wells now and then, my point being that the adventures in the pool, in the massage section and so on might evoke a reaction to be desired. There is a general impression by the one closest to her that it is pure imagination she requires special food and especially the digestion tract. Somehow I am under the impression that the crutches are being retained less for any particular need than for two points that would be better discarded such as an inclination to use them because they tend to excite greater consideration for her person and at the same time, the occasional tendency to lean on one time injury possibly provides a reason for taking pain killers when, it sometimes seems, the pain is perhaps more imaginary than anything else. I am under the impression they both are going to tend to lean more and more on their mutual friend for companionship. There was another invitation Sunday and another last night to take the day off and join them in a trip through some forest or other somewhere around to view the dogwood even though the latter has already about gone. Naturally both invitations were declined for once the banana planting has begun, it has to be carried through and not left half baked when nothing more vital is concerned than a drive that would include a noonday picnic, as a sort of time killer. As you may have noticed, it is often well nigh impossible for people with time and money on their hands to imagine the demands on other people not thus endowed with leisure and pelf. I'm so glad you have enjoyed the first half of Mont St. Michel et Chartres. The second half is theological for the most part and you probably will enjoy re-reading the first half before going into the latter section. Again my thanks for the Friday letter which affords me so much pleasure.....

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Wednesday, April 11th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, warm and humid. We got a half inch of rain last night which was just right, and for some inexplicable reason, the thermometer lingered on in the 70's and then moved up into the 80's today. In the Bermuda area the rain measured five or six inches which was too much as it tended to convert the cotton fields where the new planting has been going on, into lakes.

While the plantation here waited until noon before undertaking any field operations, I was able to round up a carpenter of sorts who, finally and at long last, began making a box for the Belle picture. I was provoked this hadn't been done a week or so ago. Just as the job was approaching the finishing line, a wire came in from Madison Avenue, asking when the picture had been shipped, for I had received the consignee's address as Mrs. Mary Vandergrief, 980 Madison Avenue, --the Park Benet Galleries. The pressure of the inquiry impelled me to do some more prodding and the box was taken to town after noon dinner and is, I hope, already on its way.

At the conclusion of the above paragraph, I had to get up to close the doors and windows for a great wind is astir. Somebody mentioned there was a tornado warning for some section of the Parishes just above this one. This must be the fringe of the thing for there is a vast cannonade going on and ever since first dark, the lightning has been so constant I could get no news, perhaps three or four flashes every second which is rather trying on the eyes if one steps out of doors.....

I have just gotten up again to observe



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what all the racket is about, --something like the sound of  
tom-toms coming down the chimney. We are  
having a tremendous hail storm and I find myself wondering  
if the dozens of tomato and pepper plants set out  
in the last couple of days are pounded to pulp.

The racket on the windows on the north side continue  
uninterrupted and just now several gourds must have  
been blown off their hanging strings on the  
front gallery, playing wonderful tattoo's drumming  
on the south gallery.

A now a call has come in from town, The Enterprise  
office reporting a damaging hail storm over the city and inquiring  
if we ever heard of such a thing down this way. We had.

Although my day was fairly active, I shouldn't have  
been as tired as I was by first dark, had there not been  
so many unimportant pressures both morning  
and afternoon. People had a way of making an unhappy choice of  
moment to drop in, endless phone and  
helpen inquiries when I was racing against the clock to  
knock off a column under some such title as  
Our Vanishing Neighbor which I wanted to get  
in this morning's out-going post, etc.  
etc. But I lost my fatigue as soon as I had dipped through  
a hot shower and had read a page or two  
before going ahead and rolling up my bathrobe sleeves  
and thus undertake some desk work. It is  
nearly 10 but there is no point in attempting to get  
any news on the radio what with the racket  
still rolling so constantly outside. Accordingly I  
shall fall back on the reading machine and get caught up  
with this or that example of literary manifestations that  
may be found conveniently to hand. I hold the  
thought the night may be less thunderous in the  
neighborhood of Lyme.....

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Thursday, April 12th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Sunny and cool. Naturally I was impatient for the dawn's early light  
enabling me to explore what and how much last night's  
hail storm had accomplished. I found not  
a single large limb broken but considerable evidence as to  
poundings received by tender, smaller things. It is  
true that the tender green things, --leaves and blossoms,  
being put out by the pecane trees were pretty thoroughly  
swept from the trees and this will probably have some effect on  
this year's crop. Some of the tomato and pepper plants set out  
in the afternoon had been pelted considerably and many of the  
stalks cut slap in two. At the same time, however,  
many of the plants escaped much of the devastation. I attribute  
this to the fact that possibly the wind and the rain just ahead  
of the hail may have created a soft mud into which the tender  
plant sagged just before the hail stones descended or  
so flattened out at the first on-slaught that  
the mud into which they sagged helped to ward off the blows.  
Half the hana garden was under water but with  
Fugabou's help, I soon had ditches opened and the water subsiding  
so that probably few plants got drowned. How the seeds  
fared, I know not. Perhaps some of them floated  
away and perhaps not. In any event, I have more seeds and  
this afternoon J. D. brought me another little package of  
tomato and pepper plants, adequate for filling in  
gaps formed by shattered plants from last night storm.  
It is interesting that all central Louisiana seems to  
have been thoroughly hailed on and the attack spread  
as far north as the environs of Shreveport.

Tonight I was able to hear a couple of news  
casts, the first time since Monday, what with all  
the static that has been brewing around  
for the past couple of days.

I found myse 9 o'clock hostess in a mild tizzy this



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Morning. J. H. couldn't sleep readily last night and before successfully folding up, he asked her if she would like to go to Mayo's with him this coming Monday. She and Elizabeth Traber are planning a party for somebody and she simply can't go to Mayo's before that party comes off but when that magical moment might be, I didn't ask. Then there are other things she wants to do, go to this place and that place, including New Iberia, and hasn't time to go to Rochester. My guess is that a going over of herself by the experts might be beneficial but I see little point in either of them bothering to chase off to Mayo's since specialists in this area have pointed out that slowing down is what is required to slow down their afflictions but neither of them has any notion of doing that even if either of them has any notion as to the meaning of the expression. Of course there is always the possibility that some doctor at Mayo's might get through to J. H. which nobody else has succeeded in doing. All suggestions that he pay attention to a diet, get a little rest occasionally and so on are simply brushed aside as of no importance and it does seem something of a waste of time to journey all the way to Mayo's to be told the same thing unless, at long last, one is prepared to pay some attention to the admonitions.

James came to see me this afternoon. He had spent the afternoon at the camp and did not know that Celeste and Clotilde Hughes were calling on Kay during the afternoon but he was glad the girls were all getting together. He reported that the Tuesday night dinner at the Country Club for Juanita B. and Pat had gone off very nicely and I was glad for all participating.

I can't remember having exerted myself physically today but possibly I did. Be that as it may, I find myself sleepy and think I shall fold up my beard as soon as I have languidly swished through a shower.....

11726

Friday, April 13th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair but a little cool.

The waxing moon beams with unusual brilliance on the shimmering snowy gardeners g rter and I reckon is pretty enough anywhere along the loops and bends of the river. I am so happy to be where I can absorb the beauty of the night and take a turn in the Ghana garden with no other companions than the two jet black cats who seem to enjoy such turns with me on nights like this.

The Walkers again invited me to join with them at their dinner for the Registers at the Country Club, after which they will proceed to the Walker home and down to the dock for a chit-chat in the moonlight to be followed by a bonfire by way of additional illumination. Naturally I declined with thanks. James mentioned this afternoon when he passed this way that he and Kay were looking forward to tonights reported that the dinner they gave for Juaita B and Pat on Tuesday night was very pleasant and apparently the ladies got along as pleasantly as did the gentlemen.

I was glad to press James in to service this fternoon to assist in attempting the reading of a letter from Paris. The boy-friend's signature or rather his script remains difficult but James got all but a few words which puts him high on the list approaching little Miss Lee who seems the expert in that field. I was afraid the letter might be an expression of worry about the picture shipment but it was merely a frie dly note, I believe. I shall hold the letter for a day or two, hoping anyother expert passing thi way may unravel the few odds and end although I doubt if there was anything important left undeciphered.

I saw neither of my neighbors from across the fence, the lady spending the day in Shreveport on interior decoration matters and the gentleman on business in Alexandria



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As I turned the page, I. S. Willard, of all people, called. She had many adventures to report covering her recent couple of weeks in the big road but seemed as full of vaguely controlled energy as usual.

I took the opportunity to voice my regret that Kay seemed determined to build in Pecan Park, hoping that when the girls got together, I. S. Willard would not rush into applause when Kay mentioned the intention she has to erect a home in that area. I said I thought anyone with ample funds would do well to select some site on the river, preferably north rather than south of the town. She said that Kay had seen some lots in the Pecan Park section that gave on the river but had been repelled from all thought of purchasing same because she had seen some cows in a pasture on the far side of the river. As Kay makes a point of wanting a measure of privacy in any home she builds, so far as neighbors are concerned, it would seem that the river on one side of her property ought to guarantee a dab of seclusion on one side at least which is more than could be said for anything in Pecan Park where on all sides she would be surrounded by houses. Whether I. S. Willard can exert any influence or not, I wouldn't know but it will do no harm to try and if she quotes me in talking with Kay, Kay will at least have the novelty to know my opinion on the subject, for she has never mentioned her plans to me and I have never referred to those she has set forth to various and sundry people more or less unknown to her save as newly acquired acquaintances. The truth is that James, having failed to elicit her interest in all the fine places she has sought out and shown to her, is now, after having had the sole responsibility and labor of three moves, is quite content to "stay put" while Kay, unwisely, I think, is more or less grabbing at any piece of property for a building site without consulting him. Unfortunately for Kay, it isn't James who is uppermost in her thoughts but Aunt Willie who is right where she wants to be and doesn't want any building being done for her in Louisiana or any where else.

Juanita A. just called. She wants to bring some Conroe friends here on Holy Saturday and so that weekend begins

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Sunday, April 16th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair but still too chilly.

It was a pleasant weekend and Saturday was especially satisfying in that I accomplished a lot of odds and ends I had put off attending to earlier in the week and finally got all swept up before the week came to a close.

At supper J. H. asked how James and Kay were doing, saying he had seen them at noon. I had not and so I couldn't tell him. It seems they had stopped to pick up Celeste to take her over to see the camp. She didn't have time to go, she explained, but she stood by the car, James along side, talking with him and Kay for the ensuing 45 minutes which would have been more than ample to take a look at the camp.

Along about first dark, Kay and James came to see me, after having spent the afternoon at the camp and liking it and we had a pleasant little session until first dark when they departed.

This afternoon Blythe and Joan came to see me, bearing an Easter-bunny basket of sandwiches, cakes and so on. The sitting was pleasant and only now does it occur to me that I didn't sever them anything by way of a libation. The truth is that I was expecting James any minute to pick me up and I reckon I was so busy trying to entice them into the garden and thence to their car that my manners flew out of the window.

Be that as it may, we had a nice chat and I was glad to get some young tomato plants of a special variety which Blythe had raised from seed for me.

She mentioned a special pink iris, now flowering at the camp, --and how she knew it was flowering there, I know not, and explained Miss Cammie had given it to her years ago and that she wondered if I thought I could get a root of it for her.



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In the garden she found some roses she liked and both she and Joan took a bouquet and some generous cuttings and that made them happy.

James came just after they left and when I told him about the iris, he said he thought the time perfect for digging same and so we ran over to the camp and did just that and thus he will be able to "heap coals of iris" on the lady's head.

He and I drove to town about 6, picked up Kay and enjoyed a leisurely dinner at the hotel after which we went for a little chat at their house where one of those social things developed which one can but regret. Kay wanted to read a biographical sketch of several pages about John Muir to me which she did. Then she wanted to read me a story by John Muir after that. James suggested we hold the story for another sitting as the hour was advancing. I suppose hours must be difficult for Kay to comprehend since she goes to bed late and arises late. I was caught by the lady's impulse to read and some consideration for James who would, after the reading, have to drive me home. Such little tugs of war are lamentable, any position the person caught between, may take. The up-shot was that we did not read the story and it was 20 minutes of 10 before we got back here and a two hour reading, had it been carried through, would certainly have delighted nobody but the reader. I am sure, when all the time element following were taken into account.

And so passeth Palm Sunday and I hold the thought it was a restful one at Lyme.....

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Monday, April 16th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair but too chilly, -- sort of 60-ish during the day and down in the 40's at night and neither seeds nor tender young plants are doing anything except, possibly, trying to decide whether to fold up their beads completely or stagger on a while longer in hopes of warmer weather.

Now that the weather is good for radio reception, I notice another seam has given way in the form of interruptions at just about the time I want to be trying to catch a radio news cast. I especially wanted to get some New Orleans station to see how the ex-communication edict of the Archbishop was put on to the air but I missed everything between 6 and 8. Perhaps I shall have better luck at 10. I am especially delighted that Leander Perez was among the three on the list. I guess he is about the most notorious political crook in the State and has done possibly more than any other single individual to keep the racial pot bubbling over ever since Little Rock. Everyone who disagrees with him, of course, is a Communist, according to him. Now I assume he will be denouncing the Archbishop for being one. In short, he is a bag of the first water and the woman who was on the same list must be on the wacky side, especially in both racial and religious matters although there must be lots of people who have spasms over the race thing who, nevertheless, do slow up a little when it comes to fighting with the Church on the subject.

As I understand it, the matter of educational details are left to the bishops to initiate changes whenever the individual bishop feels the proper time has arrived. The Bishop of Alexandria, presiding over a diocese that includes everything north from Alexandria through the Arkansas line, is letting school matters drift on the assumption that it is better to ignore the hot potatoes as much as possible and leave them alone at all cost. For that reason, this section of the State is not following the New Orleans



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pattern, designed for next autumn but already causing quite a rumpus, primarily because rabble rousers like Leander Perez keeps stirring the hill billies to white hot heat.

I often marvel at my own ignorance about taxi service in New Orleans and at how I didn't know that some cabs are permitted to take white fares only and others colored only. The difficulties that arise when a patient, accompanied by an attendant of other race, requires the use of a cab must be as bothersome as it is ridiculous.

I wonder how the mulatto makes use of a cab and I wonder if he succeeds in making use of both in the different categories or if he gets into a jam by summoning one when the driver takes him to be of the other persuasion. And all this reminds me of poor Frank Morin's boy, Tony, finding himself trying to go to a movie in New Orleans, and being sent back and forth across the lobby from the colored ticket booth to the white because white people couldn't purchase tickets for the colored section and white could get service on the other side and how Lyle finally succeeded in getting Tony into a movie house but only by dint of no end of doings.

And by dint of much doings on my part, I captured some more banties today to give to local friends fancying them. I only want a few and the vegetable garden, if it ever gets started, will not need any and so my friends are really doing me a favor by accepting them and I don't care how they dispose of them and probably some will go into pots but a number of pairs will be kept because every negro I ever knew seems to have something of the same regard for banties that he does for martins and that is quite special.

Fugabou and I gardened today, planting six more rows of okra, a couple more rows of Irish potatoes, sunflowers no end and so on, and now if only the weather will warm a little, things ought to start flourishing.....

11732

Tuesday, April 17th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Thin clouds of gauze shrouding today's sun and tonight's moon but, praise the Lord, the thermometer is moving upward a little.

Friday's letter from Lyme arrived by today's post to fill my entire Easter week with the joy coming with communion. I also loved the Easter duckling with its sweet message and the clippings concerning the new Daniels book in the Hachez setting and, I need scarcely add, I had heard nothing about same until the clippings came to hand.

It goes without saying that I was distressed to learn all that has been turning of late and I pray the Lord the pressures all around may long since have been eased and that prospects for a summer interlude may not have been dimmed.

As for the plans seeming to take shape, once the interlude takes shape, they sound quite delightful and I have a feeling the side trip u mean as much to one lady as to the other. Naturally, even as must little Miss Lee, I regret that momentarily, at least, some of the other places hoped for have to be stricken off the list but somehow I have a feeling that if this must be so, it only promises a subsequent visitation that will be equally happy.

I talked with Natalie this evening. She said she was expecting to write you tonight. It is my understanding that she and R. B. will have four hours of waiting on the first Saturday in August as they change planes at Idlewild the first Saturday in August between 2 and 6 or some such. Their return will put them in Lyme on the Saturday and Sunday of the Labor Day weekend which sounds as though such a time wouldn't be too convenient but one may explore such developments later in the season and perhaps there will be alterations of plans somewhere along the route.

I was puzzled by a cablegram this afternoon reading:



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"Anxious to know if painting is in New York.

Christian or Christiana."

I took it to be from the former but why anyone on the far side of the Atlantic should cable me instead of New York consignee about the picture, I cannot imagine. I shall respond by air, having written an air mail on the subject to Christinaa last week, --a letter which should have been to hand before today but which undoubtedly will be there shortly, giving April 11th as the shipping date from here, as I did in the aforesaid air mail.

As I puzzled over the matter as to why I, rather than the consignee, should have been asked about this point, the horrible thought struck me that possibly some other date than April 30th had been specified in the original request, asking me to forward the picture. Two of my finest readers had gone through the letter the day of its arrival and both had reported, as I had inquired of them specifically, that April 30th was indeed the date requested for the picture. I thought he in New York, --and surely express from hard to there-- ought to be collected steadily within five days, whether from April 11th, surely should have fallen well within the date.

[illegible]

I hold the thought pressures, business and non-business, may lessen promptly and that one may catch one's breath sometime during the ensuing six weeks.....

26511

Wednesday, April 18th, 1962.

**Memorandum:** Fair and warmer. If the nights will only start retaining some of the heat of the days, we ought to be pushing into summer not long after Easter.

I was delighted to find a letter from Lyme along with several other letters in today's post, all of which are tucked away in an armoir awaiting tomorrow's secretaries, all of which got sidetracked today by expected and unexpected guests who, and the who may refer either to the secretaries or the guests, --have a way approaching genius of arriving at precisely at the same times.

A secretary was waiting me as a perfect example of splendid co-incidence, when I returned to Yucca from the Post Office. As we headed toward my desk, a gentleman who must have been just behind me tapped at the door. It was a Mr. Coles of Shreveport who does something with the blind in this section of the State. He had been here four or five years before for a conference and finding himself call to Hatchitoches this morning, had told his wife it might be her big opportunity to view Melrose and so there they were. I told him to fetch his wife whom he had left in the car and there went the morning.

Last evening, just before going home, Fugbou had watered some newly set out plants and somehow had forgotten to turn off the faucet and the Ghana vegetables had received a flooding which slowed up work in that section this morning. Without telling me, the plantation had sent my helpers on some afternoon chores at 1 o'clock and

to be fortunate if not particularly religious.....



DEVIL

11735

I was still fiddling around at 1:30 awaiting their appearance when a secretary passed my way, telling me my helpers had all been taken away to Little River or some place and so we headed from Ghana to Yucca with a view of getting into the mail but as we entered the gate toward the African House, we saw four characters coming in the other gate by the big pot. It was Kay, James, Jean O'Brien and Dr. Witte. The two of them who latter had come up from New Orleans last evening and were now heading toward home, stopping off here, as James had advised me they would do during the afternoon, following luncheon at the camp.

I was especially impressed by the appearance and personality of Dr. Witte, all of which had changed wonderfully since I had seen her years ago. She looked about 20 years younger, had on a smart frock and bubbled over with gaiety. You may recall she took a year out of her lucrative practice in New Orleans to journey to the Congo where at no salary, she labored from December, 1960 to December of 1961. Naturally I brought her up to date about how I was impatient to chat with her about her impressions about how things were going in the Dark Continent but there was so much chatter by Jean that I didn't get anywhere with Soanny Witte, other than to gain the impression she thought the Congo would make it, following many years of trials and errors. She was stationed about 100 miles south of Leopoldville where there was vast need for much more medical care than was available although she was happy that as much as of an increase in such matters had developed as had since last she labored in Africa but I don't know how long ago that was. Perhaps the New Orleans travelers will be up this way again before long and I shall have an opportunity to extract her from the babble of chit-chat long enough to get some of her impressions before they fade.

From Good Friday night through Sunday night, there are five or six honkey-tonks around and about planning dances, suggesting that Holy weekend ought to be forlissome if not particularly religious.....

11736

DEVIL

Thursday, April 19th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and pleasantly warm.

I was so glad to have news from Lyme and it all seemed to be on the promising side. May the promise readily develop into performance so that the six weeks just ahead may so turn as to make all plans possible for carrying out.

It was so good to have the clipping, too, concerning the elevation of our favorite man of God into the community of the Saints on May 6th. Little Miss Lee is so right about the extra foral decors that will obtain in the little chapel on that particular date. I suppose I must have known the residence of the new saint's papa's town being Burgos but if I did know it, it had slipped my mind and I am glad the clipping gave me an opportunity to fix it solidly in my mind. If circumstances permit, I think I might do a column on the aforesaid Martin so it will appear whenever the Thursday prior to May 6 may occur.

I think I did not mention yesterday that in the morning while over the coffee cups, mine hostess and I were surprised to see your friend, Inez Chaplin, drive in. I thought she looked much as usual, bubbling over with froth but with pleasant intent. She feigned surprise to find both mine hostess and me in plantation garb. Do you reckon she could picture us as starting off the day in tuxedo and evening garb. She inquired as to what I had been doing so early in the morning, --it was about 9:20 a.m. at the moment, and I said I had been extending some designs in the vegetable garden and, just as though I had asked her to lend me a hand, she turned her eyes toward heaven and said the one thing in this world she never wanted to see was a vegetable garden and casually I opined



38711

11737

that her presence in mine would certainly constitute a  
bull in a china shop situation and we all laughed and I  
departed, leaving the girls to plan their next party.

I came by Yucca this afternoon around 3 to find some more seeds when  
my 'phone rang. It was Mrs. Spinks calling, saying she wanted  
to tell me she had left some cake in the area way of the back  
gallery of the big house and though perhaps she should advise me so  
the dog wouldn't get it before I did. She said she and  
her son, Johnny, had driven over from Crockett to see about  
Johnny matriculating at Northwestern for the summer session. I  
assumed she was calling from town but  
it turned out she was at the artist's house. I accordingly insisted  
she and her son come back which they did for a few minutes as Johnny  
was anxious to see some of the older buildings. I was happy to have  
some cherry tomatoes, -- the plants, that is, of the tomatoes about  
the size of a big cherry, -- and they seemed pleased to get them  
and a gob of gardener's garter, and off they went toward Crockett  
and off I went to finish whatever I was doing at home. As I responded  
to the supper bell, I saw a couple of figures going toward Yucca.  
It was Kay and James whom I found on my front gallery  
on my return. They wanted to present me with an Easter gift  
of shirts and pants against the impending hot season and they wanted  
me to go over to the camp with them to watch the moon rise. We  
got there in time to see the sunset and after dark settled down,  
James prepared a fine picnic supper for three, using a little flashlight  
as a lamp since the electricity had gone out of whack. As we had  
come to see the moonlight, we most certainly didn't need any electricity  
and it was all very pleasant although I must confess I did regret  
my inability to get any news worth mentioning as it was late  
before we got back here. It would be a wonderful thing if Kay  
should discover something to absorb her time and energies. Somewhere  
there is an element of the problem confronting little girls when  
school is out for the summer vacation and the young mind hasn't  
decided what to do with all the leisure. With some kind of a program  
of interest to pursue, the pull exerted by the Bluff might be less,  
too, I imagine. Well, I must knock off some mail and as the hour  
approaches midnight, I had better get busy.....

11738

38711

Good Friday, April 20th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Summerish around 90 with a promise of dew and damps on the morrow.

A number of radio stations in Alexandria, Natchitoches and Shreveport, are going to some lengths to beat the drums regarding sunrise services, and often Hodges Gardens is mentioned. Even the official weather bureau took special pains to point out that the sun would rise one minute later on Easter morning than on Holy Saturday but raced on to explain Hodges Gardens would open its gates at 3:30 on Sunday morning for the services that would get under way at 5 a.m. and, if the rains are over by 3:30, there will undoubtedly be many people who will be-take themselves to shiver during the doings. It goes without saying that I will not be among those present. As in the case of all endurance tests, I favor everybody participating who wants to. All I ask is that I may be permitted to enjoy my Easter sunrise programs in the comfort of my own boudoir, leaving it to those who will to put themselves through whatever rigors they think the business justifies.

I know not, if anything, what the Registers may be planning for Easter. James arrived ten minutes before dinner today, bringing some little eggplants which I had ordered in town. He remained for dinner, of course, and came back to Yucca with me afterward. I am certainly falling behind in my news gathering opportunities but am catching up on my social life.

He said Kay and he hoped to entice I. S. Willard to the camp on Saturday evening for dinner or rather for supper and that they hoped I make the fourth person present. I had already told James I would have friends of the Joe Henrys from Conroe on Saturday afternoon and that I wanted to be at Yucca



28V11

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by first dark to attend to several matters. James hoped I could fit the supper thing into my schedule and I shall try although I wish they had arranged the supper either for tonight or Sunday night, what with them having no calendars to content with. Somewhat wistfully last Sunday night when the reading of the article of John Muir was being contemplated, Kay opined, --and I found this interesting, --that they had moved to Natchitoches on the hope of seeing more of me but that it seemed as though the opportunities were scant. I suppose that is one of the drawbacks of having wealth, to wit, that one gets in the habit of making moves without ever thinking to consult others who might be affected by them more or less. I can understand readily enough how people with nothing to do naturally tend to lean on others to help take up the slack of time but I propose to retain a semblance of my own routine since I believe the have-nots ought to have a voice even though it isn't so loud as the Haves.

I got some news at midnight, last past, and was impressed by a standard phrase employed since it didn't seem to apply to the news item. A little girl in Shreveport with a companion explored a bayou in the neighborhood and fell into the water. Her frightened companion screamed for help and in due time, the parents of the little girl to find the child floating on the water, face down, and, to quote direction, "to all practicable purposes, dead". Fortunately, the child was fished out and revived and in a short time was none the worse for wear. The phrase, however, in that setting seemed so odd, --"to all practicable purposes".

I learned today that Kay has seemingly decided against buying the four lots in Pecan Park and I was glad to learn that.

I hold the thought this weekend especially may hold a measure of peace for little Miss Lee.....

18V11

11740

Easter Sunday, April 22nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and mild with a slightly warming trend.

The weekend was pleasant with only one dull note, -- news that Sister, daughter, son and daughter-in-law would dine here on Monday, pausing on their way to Baton Rouge where Sister will deposit the others, returning here for a visit, probably during mid week.

Saturday's post brought news from New York and Paris concerning the picture which apparently arrived safely in New York. The New York letter has something to say about a May 16th showing which, like all the other dates in this transaction, seems to be lacking in clarity as to what the whole business is about.

I gather from Christy's letter that it was indeed his intention to specify April 13rd instead of April 30th. I shall not inquire how he thought a letter written from Paris during the last week in March, would effect the rounding up, boxing, shipping and so on and still expect the item to be in New York the following week but apparently he wasn't too disturbed by the actual shipping date. I hold the thought I have heard the last of that transaction.

My Saturday evening plans included supper at the camp with Kay and James, the rest of the day being devoted to family friends and whatever developed unexpectedly since holidays are usually fraught with unexpected and unannounced.

I did have an appointment with Juanita A. who had asked me to give four of her Conroe friends a round when they came to visit her. She called around 2:15 to say they were all set to leave town forthwith if I was ready to receive them. I was thus prepared and half hour late I did receive them, finding them to be kindly, simple folk. We had just got started nicely



01711

11741

When four people put in appearance. I thought it was Tom Harris of Eldorado but it turned out to be some neighbor of Pat and Juanita E. named Heever, of Magnolia. I thought I had seen him before. I was positively. Mr. Hoover has been here before and he could take his associates with him to see for themselves until I was disengaged. And that is just what did happen and before the Hoover contingent was gone, some New Orleans Hertzogds, weekending at Magnolia, put in an unannounced appearance, and somewhere in the shuffle of these three unrelated groups. James appeared but retreated, returning later to pick me up and whisk me away to the camp where the supper was peaceful and withal delectable.

Today was unusually quiet and a little too prolonged on the social side. Celeste had invited Kay and Jamesto drop in at 4:30 or 4:45 which they did. We usually sup at 6 on Sundays but we didn't tonight for Celeste, it seems, had invited Nez Chaplin and Toosie Millsbaugh for 6:30 or some such time, for drinks but not for supper. And so those ladies came and Nez told stories by endless prompting on Celeste's part and so it was considerably after 8 before they departed and it was 9:30 before we had finished supper which was all very pleasant if it was too late. James whispered: "Almost Goodbye" to me when our hostess tended to make a point out of keeping the session going further into the evening but J. H. and I pointed out that the morrow's dawning would be coming too soon and finally the athering broke up to the vast satisfaction of James, I think, and of me, I am sure. How long the two ladies could have kept it going, I wouldn't know for we finally did tear ourselves away and here I am, about as ignorant of world happenings so far as radio goes, as has been the case in the past several days. But now I fold and may rest be upon the Lyme landscape.....

11742

Monday, April 23rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Mostly cloudy and warm with a vague hint we might get a sprinkle tonight, I hope.

I was altogether enchanted to discover an air mail from Lyme in today's post. It is true that visitors and secretaries arrived at the same time and that one visitor assisted me with most of the letters but naturally I preserved the Lyme letter unopened in the armoire, against better secretarial assistance on the morrow.

The Shreveport contingent arrived at the dinner hour and remained until after secretarial time. I met Lloyd's wife, Marguerite, for the first time. Remarkable to relate, she seems like a nice person. How she got herself into such a family, I cannot imagine.

Sister said she was driving the children to Baton Rouge and returning here tonight, that she was not returning here but going straight home from Baton Rouge, that she was going to spend a few days visiting in New Roads, that she was coming here early tomorrow. One could take whatever statement he liked, if any. Personally, I favored the direct return to Shreveport to Baton Rouge withouts top.

Sister said she was sending three people to view the old plantation, two gentlemen and one lady, who are living at her house. She said she didn't know if they would come alone or if she would come with them. They would stay for dinner. She guessed that might be next week.

She asked me if I would show Marguerite some of the houses. I welcomed the opportunity Lloyd and his sister having already quitted the table. As Marguerite arose from table, Sister blurted out:

"I suppose you know Marguerite is pregnant."



11743

So much for that visitation and when I handed Marguerite back to the starting place, I saw nothing of the ends and that was that.

A call from Mrs. Walker revealed that she goes to New Orleans for the coming weekend to a Press Association meeting. She asked if I could get her a column for the following week shortly. I told her I would knock one off tonight and get it in tomorrow's mail.

I had expected Ugabou to lend me a hand this afternoon in the vegetable section but he was whisked away on some other job and so I labored alone. Returning to Yucca for water in mid afternoon, I arrived just as the phone was ringing. It was I. S. Willard, apologizing for not having called during the weekend. She plans leaving tomorrow for a week in south Louisiana but plans to return early the following week and asked if she might bring some lady with her. She might. There was quite a rigamarole about her 1959 income tax records to which I paid scant attention and when I saw James approaching the house, I terminated the conversation as quickly as possible which wasn't quickly.

James spoke with interest and pleasure at last night's supper and we both laughed at the "Almost Goodbye" spirit obtaining throughout the evening. He helped me with some of the mail which included a letter from a lady in Fort Worth who had been here once with Norma Myers years ago. Today's Fort Worth communication was a repeat of the one last week that faded out utterly before I got around to explore its contents. She asked if she might bring a friend down and suggested I call her collect if I found that easier than writing. How do I know from day to day in what sort of a study Melrose is likely to be two seconds from any time of writing. I marvel at the persistence of people who want to come this way and I laugh in my beard if I pause long enough to consider how amazed they would be if they ever saw what lies behind the Arras of which they never see, I hope, but one side.

I apologize for the dull nature of this memo. May I do better on the morrow.....

11744

24  
Tuesday, April 24th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and warm this morning, followed by over half an inch of rain at noon, with clouds and the warmth continuing the balance of the day.

It was so nice to be able to glimpse Lyme as of Saturday last past, from the letter arriving yesterday and read today.

I am glad the weather was favorable for all the items on the Saturday agenda and for Easter Sunday. It is heartening to consider that a month stretches ahead in order that recuperative processes may effect a condition permitting the carry out of plans for the late Spring outing. May the good work go forward and good health enable all the original plans to be carried out.

I was glad to get nitrate spread across the vegetable garden this morning, followed by a thorough watering of all the rows of vegetables and the numerous vegetable and flower plants before noon. Ugabou lending a hand. The rains that came during the noon hour was not a bit too much when added to that applied by hose earlier in the day and I am expecting everything to jump skyward.

Dr. Talley came this afternoon and I enjoyed chatting with her. She used to know Dr. Witte quite well and thinks her a nice person. Dr. Talley will make another round up this way in June and plans to take off for Europe with her 15 year old son in mid August. They will travel with a medical group to London, the Rhine, Paris, Switzerland and Italy. The son will fly back from there arriving a little late for school, about 4 days, I believe. Dr. Talley herself will fly on to Madrid and thence to Lisbon where the medical pow-wow takes place.



11745

From three agents at supper time, I learned Sister arrived here around 1:30, picked up Fugabou at his house, drove to the cook's house to ask if there might be food at the big house, made a round there and then, in a somewhat spirited manner and raucous voice, headed toward Shreveport. Fugabou was in the kitchen when I left the big house after supper and he was pretty high, too. It goes without saying I am grateful for the peace obtaining as a result of the visitor's pre-occupation with fire water and getting home.

Thanks to the information in the clipping forwarded by little Miss Lee concerning the canonization of the Blessed Martin, I made use of the information appearing there in the clipping and knocked off a column last night under the title of A Saint Is Born. It will appear in the May 3rd issue of the or whatever the date of the Thursday of the first week in May happens to be as on Thursday I suppose the way I handled the thing will upset the conventional Christians and the standard racial bigots. If the Enterprise rejected the piece, I should be the first to grieve with them they were doing the correct thing but in the past the Enterprise has never rejected anything, no matter how poor and how thin, and I reckon the Blessed Martin piece will probably appear in print, too.

I didn't see any Registers today. Kay wasn't feeling well yesterday, James said. Perhaps they both remained home today. Probably there will be a call tonight. The kids on the party line have kept that instrument pretty solidly employed during the past five hours and interruptions from the Southern Bell have been pleasantly absent.....

11746

Wednesday, April 25th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Dazzling sunshine all day and withal warm until sundown when it cooled off again. I think everything from weed to tree must have jumped and the pecan leaves are blocking solidly the form trees present in summer when one sees only the trunk and the leaves but none of the branches making them look like bits of colored paper cut out and pasted across the landscape.

Just to keep the record straight in the matter of women supposedly being more practiced in the art of gossip than are the men, I haven't heard a single woman refer to judicial or medical philandering in town but I have heard several men mentioning same. The wife of Judge Gehagan, --I know not how the name is spelled, --son of Russell Gehagan who got banged up in a Folkswagon shash-up a while back, --the Judge was surprised by his wife at the home of a lady living more or less in the Register neighborhood. The lady's wife and husband and children were somewhere or other and the Judge's wife threw a fit and he took herself to a hospital. What the Judge did, I know not.

In the medical field, Dr. Sills was surprised in bed with some gentleman's wife and the annoyed husband took a pot-shot at Dr. Sills, hitting him in the hip, shall we say. Verily Spring does appear to be in the air regardless. If second class citizens engage in such extra-marital doings, the first class citizens undoubtedly lop the whole thing into the doings of second class citizenship but when a prominent doctor and a city Judge goes in for the same sort of thing, the ladies, at least, keep their lips sealed.

I was surprised and delighted to hear reported from several radio stations during the past 24 hours that a leading New Orleans station, I believe it was WDSU came out with an editorial blast against the Citizen's Council and all its works. It takes courage for



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such a news medium to defy the chicanery of the Citizens' Council and I hope WDSU has ample funds to weather the inevitable storm that will rage, fanned on by the idiotic group the station is having the courage to denounce.

I am forever finding myself perplexed by the mental processes of smart people and today I found myself as puzzled again as I am almost every day from one quarter or another when the inexplicable doings of this or that smart person is exhibited without the smart person ever dreaming he has done anything paradoxical. As you may have heard me mention, I have been laboring to create a vegetable-garden at hana and the pushing up of pretty rows of things as provided several people with a measure of pleasure. Picture my astonishment today when a servant appeared at my door, bearing a box containing four white rabbits which J. H. and Dan think would look pretty hopping about the gardens. Knowing little or nothing about such animals, I reckon they would never guess that a domesticated pet rabbit can clean up rows of vegetables over night. They probably don't know either the wild rabbits of which there are plenty about the gardens, don't seem to care for vegetables but prefer grasses for their staple diet. If I point out to J. H. that it would seem to me a great loss of several kinds if a man ploughed, planted and cultivated a fine field of corn and then, when it had attained a height of a foot or two, turned in the cows, J. H. would certainly think such a person wacky. It's odd he never seems to think what havoc four pet rabbits can effect in what was a well-ordered layout of vegetables. That as it may, where there's a will there's a way. I put the rabbits in the Unicorn House with the peacocks today. They will remain there for a week or two when they will eventually dig their way out of the enclosure and vanish and probably the other two will do the same thing a few nights later, don't you think so.

And now for this sitting, I fold.....

11748

Thursday, April 26th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and warm.

The enclosures are scarcely worth glancing at for none of them contain anything of interest. The one from Dallas indicates somebody's interest in the first wife of Jefferson Davis, which seems to be going to a lot of trouble about a personality which, so far as I know, was of no especial interest to her contemporaries and was sufficiently colorless to excite nobody's interest in the years since her death.

The note from Lloyd's wife, Marguerite, is interesting, not in itself, but simply because it indicates she is possessed of the race to say thank you,--a virtue which nobody in the family into which she married never manifested anything of the sort.

Helen's letter, surprisingly, struck me as being on the dull side,--a rare quality I don't remember she ever manifested before. I believe this is the first one coming to hand since Christmas time, the delay obviously caused by pre-occupation at home and in the office.

During the past couple of days when stepping into the hana garden at dawning, I have been impressed by the logic of using the bean, of all vegetables, to figure in the fairy story about Jack in the Bean Stalk. I tried to get all of the major vegetable seeds in the ground within a couple of days of each other but the beans were planted last, their planting held up by various circumstances. But in spite of the lateness of getting into the good earth, they sprouted and jumped up above ground well before all the other items and now are climbing skyward before some of the other things are more than pushing their first timid heads about the surface of the ground.

James spent the day at the camp. He is as gay and cheery as ever and I think the excuse the camp provides for spending



11749

time away from home is excellent since it provides both husband and wife is a measure of independent action that is advantageous for both. He has never mention his inclination to do a bit of fishing from the little dock in front of the camp but my agents report he apparently enjoys doing just that, even though none of his catches thus far have been impressive but yet of sufficient bulk to make them presentable to his neighbors.

He thought he was reaching Yucca about 4 this afternoon, as he had left his watch at home and was merely guessing at the time. Actually it was 5 o'clock. I invited him to stay for supper but he declined on grounds he had promised to take Kay for a ride before they dined. He is always so kind about doing chores on my behalf and so I asked him to drop some tomato plants at the Walkers for me. About 9 o'clock this evening, Mrs. Walker called to say her husband had just found a package on their front gallery, --the tomato plants James had taken in and dropped for me.

James said Kay might come down with him on the morrow and if she did, they would drop in to see me before sundown. The weather bureau speaks of rain for tomorrow afternoon and night and they probably may hesitate about making a round if it does get excessively damp.

I have been giving some thought to having James edit Cane River Memo, rounding up photos and so on on the theory that he might relish such a job and a job it would be, selecting which ones would be suitable for inclusion in collection whose primary purpose would be to give a flavor of contemporary life along Cane River in the mid 1920's, --stuff about birds, animals, Mr. McGrew and so on. I am going to give this a little more thought before mentioning it but I honestly think it would provide him with a dab of work he would enjoy and at the same time he would be accomplishing a tremendous job in separating the wheat, if any, from the chaff.

So things turn and so must

11750

Friday, April 27th, 1962.

Memoandum:

Cloudy this morning, a. inch and a half of rain at noon, cloudy and a little cooler tonight.

First off, I want to inquire about 2 points:

first, when, as to mailing date, would it be well for me, toward the end of the month, to withhold correspondence. Of course I have a vague idea of about when but as little Miss Lee is more acutely aware of the usual time lag between posting and receiving, I should appreciate her opinion of a matricial figure, and,

second, as there will probably be 8 or 10 issues of The Enterprise during the vacation interlude, would it be better to hold each issue, forwarding same from day to day, following the resumption of usual correspondence, or would it be better for me to save only the page containing Cane River Memo, to be forwarded later in the season. One way will be as easy as the other for me and I shall await your advice, whether to save entire issue or only a single page. It is understood, of course, that when they finally do go forward, they will be mailed in dribblets so they will not be too cumbersome all at one time.

In one variation or another an episode happened today that is, fortunately comparatively infrequent, but sufficiently similar to others happening occasionally that I recall the one before when it unfolds again and again. I was just leaving the store-post office, around 10:30 when I noticed a car slowing down and, as usual, I did not stop but kept moseying right along. On reaching Yucca I responded to my phone which just started ringing. I was the clerk, saying four ladies were anxious to make a little tour. I said I would meet them at the front gate forth with. Accordingly, before I had reached the half way point, I was surprised to see Celeste coming toward me. She said there were ladies for a tour, and walking with me, announced my idea



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11751

and proceeded on her way toward her house without saying Good anything. The ladies turned out to be charming, two from New Orleans, one from Tonkers and one from some place else. once or twice about my courtesy and kindness in receiving the I thought nothing about it until, after they were gone and the clerk passed this way to pick me up for dinner, he reported that the ladies had come into the store, bearing a letter of introduction from somebody, --I never saw the letter and I do not know to whom it was addressed, but possibly it was written to Melrose plantation, but in an event, at just that moment, before the clerk could wave them in my direction Celeste entered the picture, made a great fuss about people not telephoning for appointments and a general causing a vast to do over nothing and doubly so as it is I, not she, who takes or take such visitors under my wing. It would appear that every once in a while she simply has to blow steam and prefers taking it into high gear against unsuspecting pilgrims. It seems to odd that a person who frankly states her primary interest in life is in parties and being with people should take such pot shots at so many who, in more cases than one that I have known about, might well have served her advantageously in just the line she is most interest.

I saw her at the coffee hour and she and four or five of her girl friends are planning to picnic at Hodges Gardens on the morrow, leaving here around 10, and making a day of it with the numerous concourse that will probably be there on the morrow to participate in the Rose Festival or whatever gathering is styled. I believe the festival is scheduled to last through Sunday and I hope the weather will be fine both days but the weather bureau predicts rain for both days. I'm sure today's downpour but have put a crimp in preparations being made at the gardens for the impending State Garden Club members from all over the place had endless lay-visitors.

The vegetable garden at Ghana seemed to come through and from the early afternoon lake engulfing part of it and I hold the thought weekend rains, if any, may be sedate.....

11752

00711

Sunday, April 29th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Partly cloudy, warm and humid. It was somewhere in the 90's today and tonight at 10:14, it is still in the 80's. In short, summer, it would seem, has at long last arrived.

I trust it was as quiet in Lyme as in these parts over the weekend for I can imagine how many things require attention in preparation for no end of doings before the ensuing month plays out.

My neighbor joined with several girl friends in spending the day at Hodges Gardens. They went in the morning and about 8 tonight or rather last night, when I returned from the camp, I did not see her car back home so I assume the delirium went on for quite a while. She reported no end of hatching people present, and just as many for all about the Gulf States area. The roses had been effected by the March cold but there were lots of pretty ones in spite of Jack Frost devastations. Mr. Hodges was seen and found to look better than he did a few months back. From far and near ladies were designated to submit flower arrangements. Most of these ladies came on Friday afternoon, where housed in the dormitory on Friday, night, following dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Hodges at their island residence, and the arrangements made early on Saturday. One interesting wrinkle, following the action of the judges in awarding ribbons on Saturday was the furry of a New Orleans lady, furious at not having received a blue ribbon, grabbed her arrangement and flew back to the Crescent City. Obviously there's no point in participating in such a gala occasion if one doesn't receive the top award.

I inquired about the status of the motel planned for the



11753

gardens and was told it hadn't been started. I was also told it was almost ready for occupancy and that it had merely had its foundations poured. I think I shall drop C. P. Byrd a line and find out what the status, --if any,--may actually be.

I guess that was all I did hear about Saturday's doings except that the Rocket was there taking pictures and looking tired.

In the evening James came along and invited me to join him atnd K at the camp for supper which I did and enjoyed.

This morning before 9, Blythe called from Alexandria to ask if she might bring some ladies on Tuesday morning. She might. I was glad to learn she would not be up this afternoon for that gave me greater freedom to get away for a little ride with James and Kay, after which we again dropped in at the camp again for supper. I find Kay manifesting scant physical strength and there is a possibility she may enjoy it. In any event, James attends to everything and I should think he would be exhausted but he maintains remarkable vivacity.

I assume one of the many honkey-tonks in this area will become inoperative as from this afternoon. It was one located near Cognac on the road to Montgomery ferry. Operated by Lima Davis, it has been the scene of many a scuffle during the past few years. Lima and his wife have been in a state of discord for the past day or two it is said. Lima with some show of pugnaciousness, went to John Payne's house in town this afternoon. John Payne, being Lima's father-in-law. John warned Lima to stay away but Lima paid him no mind and Joahn shot Lima thrice, killing him instantly. There are five little children. And so Lima has gone to his great reward and whether John Payne will take a vacation down the road or not remains to be seen and one less honkey-tonk more or less will make little difference. And so the new week beings and may it be a kindly one at Lyme.....

11754

Monday, April 30th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and humid. Some kind of a storm is blowing out of Texas eastward through Shreveport and on into Missouri. I suppose we might get a sprinkle but not more but the abundance of static knocked out any sense in tonight's Morgan Beatty, Lowell Thomas and Henry Morgan news programs.

It was such a pleasant surprise to find a weekend air mail from Lyme by today's post together with another smaller envelope from the same direction, I believe. I got to read only the air mail but none of the clippings and so I shall have the pleasure of re-reading the air mail and its enclosures plus the other item on the morrow, I hope.

It is good to know there was a measure of peace if not too intense over the holiday I can well imagine the unhappiness that must have been experienced in more than one quarter when news came to hand about various changes, retirements and so on. What a pity some people's courses seem charted on seas that are never smooth and forever characterized by unpleasant current and I don't know which are the more lamentable, those that are forever visible to the naked eye or those that lurk beneath the surface, periodically emerging to make sailing on the difficult side. If one could but wave a wand and smooth out such troubled circumstances but permanently.

I am so glad you heard from Natalie. It is impossible for me to say which girl will provide the other with more pleasure, should contact somehow be effected,--either out-going or in-coming. There is always something so romantic about making tentative dates following experiences that will mean so much to little Miss Lee and to Natalie before each is able to embrace the other after the grand tour has been achieved I have 't heard from Natalie since last I mentioned chatting with her and I haven't the slightest doubt that just like little Miss Lee, she is bound to be up to her hips in "musts" as the season advances and as the day for spreading the wings for taking off comes closer.



11755

Last week, Kay heard me mention some special kind of tomato plants I wanted and she ordered them from some advertiser in South Louisiana, making a great point of having the shipment sent directly to me. Well, naturally, no attention was paid to that admonition and the plants apparently spent the weekend in the Natchitoches post office. James brought them down this noon and, sorry sight they were, string-like things about 14 inches in length and impossible so far as any hopes of making them survive. But Fugabou and I cut them down by a foot and stuck them in the ground and I have already told Fugabou that if one of the 29 plants come to life we shall always refer to it as Lazarus, a name he vaguely remembered hearing, asking me what that made him and I said Jesus, of course, and he liked that.

James remained for noon dinner and wanted to see the Ghana garden afterward. Sister, unannounced, suddenly appeared, bringing a couple of bags with her, the three of them having Baton Rouge as their destination. They threaten, all three, to honor us with another call on Wednesday. And so, between James and Sister and her two companions, I got no noon news and what with tonight's static, I feel fairly ignorant as to what goes on in the world.

Between jumps today, I took time out to explore how a couple of the banties are doing on their respective second go-rounds at setting. Mrs. Murgatroyd has only 8 eggs but probably is still laying. She forsook her armchair at the east end of the gallery and set up housekeeping on the other armchair at the west end of the place while the other biddie, -- a blue Murgatroyd, took over the black Murgatroyd's domicile. The blue Murgatroyd is setting on 22 eggs and how she covers them adequately is a mystery to me possibly she doesn't but they all seem warm and that is primarily what is required, I suppose. The other prospective mothers obviously have hidden their nests further afield and only time will reveal how all fared.

May one catch one's breath every once in a while as the unrelenting pace keeps going.....

11756

Tuesday, May 1st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Three and a half inches of rain during the night, followed by a cloudy morning and a sunny afternoon.

I was so happy to wedge in secretarial assistance between jumps today and again I thank you for the translations, if I may use the term, of the boy friend's scrawls, for the obituary covering friend husband of Clara Longworth and the extra little note offering further translations, should circumstances arise.

In pursuance of her Sunday 'phone call, Blythe appeared with five ladies, all named Brewer, from Alexandria. There was a vague mist and it was quite soggy under foot. They made the rounds and then journeyed on to Natchitoches for noon dinner, Blythe leaving me a dandy May basket of toothsome things such as strawberries, sandwiches, cakes and Heaven knows what all. It was just after the local dinner hour that I tucked in some desk work where upon some ladies appeared unannounced on the gallery, -- the Brewer contingent stopping off for more of a go-round following their Natchitoches jaunt.

Blythe handed me one laugh of which she never dreamed. A couple of months back, she asked me if I wanted some of the special tomato plants that produce the pear tomato, -- a misnomer at best, since the tomato of this variety doesn't look like a pear but a great big plum. Be that as it may, I said I would love some young plants if she had in mind sowing the seeds. She did, indeed, produce a fine lot of small plants and in due time delivered them but, to my disappointment, explained they were just what I wanted, the little cherry tomato variety. My heart sank inwardly but naturally I smiled and thanked her although plenty of the cherry variety always self-sows and I needed none. Later Kay heard of my desire for the pear tomato and



11757

ordered some for me and they arrived in a pitiable condition and I doubt if any of them survive. On considering all these circumstances, I 'phoned town today, asking that some pear tomato seeds be sent me. Then Blythe arrived this morning and asked me if I didn't want some cherry tomato plants and I told her I thought that was what she had brought me a while back. She said she hadn't and I glanced out over the Ghana garden, wondering that I had planted for cherry and wondering if it could be pear or what. Given two months or so, and I reckon I'll know where I am at, as it were, but not before. If she did bring me pear originally, I need no more but if she didn't I shall need starting the seeds of same, and at the moment I am quite at sea as to what the harvest may be.

I heard from James a few minutes ago. He said Kay had not slept last night and remained in bed until this afternoon when, on his request, the lady doctor came to see the patient. It was the first meeting for all three and, according to James, the impression made by the doctor was so favorable that after she had gone, Kay decided she wanted to get up and take a ride down to the camp which she and James did. I believe it is next week Kay goes to the Bluff again unless, of course, the lady doctor manufactures miracles in the mean time.

On the other hand, of course, the power exerted by Aunt 'illie may be more potent than the lady Doctor and so Kay, in that case, will probably go anyway.

Natalie just called. She mentioned her enchantment in hearing from little Miss Lee. She is having the Registers for dinner on Thursday night, after which she and R.B. will take them to the college for a performance of some Gilbert and Sullivan opera and I understand mighty little about social life versus physical handicaps, et

11758

Wednesday, May 2nd, 1962.

Memorandum: Fair and pleasantly cool. The day was a busy one for me, more because of unexpected little twists than anything else.

Yesterday I was glad to hear that Ezra, husband of Doreatha, the cook, at long last had be-taken himself to Shreveport to get a thorough examination at the hospital. He has been having severe pains in the head for several months, attacks lasting 15 minutes to half an hour, and doctors thus far haven't been able to effect anything by way of cure or relief. Everybody was accordingly glad when, after much prodding and another attack on Sunday, and Monday, he took off voluntarily yesterday. I was disappointed, however, to learn from Doreatha this morning that Ezra had returned home last evening, saying he had gone through several tests but got impatient when it began growing dark and so had dropped everything and returned home.

I was disappointed this morning, too, when I noticed at first glance at dawn that 'ugabou hadn't waited even for big day to arrive before starting to tilt the bottle. He did next to nothing all day although there was much to be done around and about for during the evening last past, the General's wife had called from San Antonio to say she and her husband would be heading for home today and would arrive at Melrose at sundown. Word was put out here this morning of their impending arrival and everybody admonished not to tell Sister, should the latter pause here, en route from Baton Rouge to Shreveport.

At coffee this morning I met Miss Kinsey, the R.E.A. demonstrator, who had dropped in to chat with



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11759

Celeste. Miss Kinsey was inordinately cordial to me. I had not seen her in several years, I guess, when she was a little wacky and, among other things, reported to Dr. Knipmeyer that I was just "pulling in his leg" when I got him to assist me with handwritten material because I was so lazy I wouldn't bother to read my own mail for, according to Miss Kinsey, my vision was just as penetrating as anyone's. Poor Miss Kinsey.

And so she finally left and I pulled out and Celeste headed for the Country Club where she and Elizabeth Traber were entertain four of the girls at luncheon and bridge.

Along about 4 o'clock I learned Ezra wasn't feeling well and had been driven to Hatchitoches to see a doctor and that Doreatha had accompanied him. This meant no supper at the big house for anybody, including the atonhoge enrys who did indeed arrive at about first dark. I got the news from the grapevine and hurried to the store to round up something for myself and thus avoid a prolonged session across the fence when and if the hostess got back from the Country Club which she indeed did and called me to come to sup and I demurred on rounds I had already broken bread. It is better that way since this will give the sisters-in-law an opportunity to talk party and the brothers a chance to commune with each other which they always enjoy while I enjoy the opportunity to collapsing at Yucca which I don't mind saying is pleasant following an active day, which, among other things, including the digging up of sections of the brick pavements on both the back and front galleries, undermined during the last night or two by over industrious armadillo intruders.

So night settles down along this bend of the river and may there be a measure of the same quiet bestowing rest on Lyme.....

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Thursday, May 3rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and mild.

The General came to see me about 8 this morning and, as always, we had a pleasant conversational turn covering no end of subjects.

Among other topics touched up was the artist and he wanted to know when I thought would be the best time for him and his wife to call on little Miss Hunter.

I did not tell him anything about the most exciting news in the life of the artist at just this moment, thinking she would get a measure of pleasure out of the opportunity she might have in pointing with pride to her new possession, of all things, an automobile. For a garage she is using a pecan tree in new and tender leaf and I reckon that will serve her as well as a conventional type car house since the openness of the car's surroundings will afford her every opportunity to get a good view of it whenever she glances in the direction of the tree under which it stands.

She acquired the car yesterday, purchasing it from the Jodey Roc,ue garage up the Bermuda road a piece. Of course she hasn't a license as yet and no license plates. Her grandson, Jackie's boy, will conduct her whenever she wants "to broad". Of course Jackie's son, a youth of perhaps 16 summers, hasn't any license either so far as driving is concerned but such a minor point would scarcely deter either the artist or the boy who is a stupid fellow. Junior can tear up a truck or a tractor without deliberate speed and I have no doubt the artist's new car is heading for some rough going. It may last long enough for the artist to take a lesson or two but probably no more. I think she is not the driver type but that will not restrain her from trying her hand at it and if God be merciful as He is said to be, He will gently put artist and car into



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11761

the ditch before she smashes herself and any pedestrian or auto operator who may be in the big road when she takes off.

Like so many ridiculous possessions owned by most people, there are probably several why the artist had to have a car. He hopes to lure "Pa" back to his courting ways is possibly a paramount one. Another is probably her desire to whiz off to town or any old place whenever she feels like it. Possibly an even greater impulse to own a car may stem from the same motive that impelled Jack Morris to purchase one and park it beside his house where it stood for years, serving as a disorderly looking garden piece and giving Jack who never once rode in it, since it was never cranked up from the time he acquired it, to give him a feeling of possessing something he felt was fashionable to own. But whatever the artist's reasons, little Miss Hunter is now the proud owner of a car and as for the future and whether it overtakes her for a ride, we shall see.

I had lots of visitors today and most of them pleasant. James dropped in this evening and reported that the lady doctor had diagnosed Kay's dietary difficulties just as he always has, -- a fear on Kay's part impelling her to avoid eating normally, calling for no end of medicines accompanied by equally quantities of laxatives so that her body revolts at the thought of food. James thinks the lady doctor could bring Kay around to normal eating, were the lady-doctor given a chance to work on her new patient. ut Kay plans to take off next week for the Carolinas, -- Sout to pick up Aunt "illie and with her proceed to North Carolina somewhere in the Asheville area, to go through some sort of a diet hospital which, old observers feel, will do Kay good only if she didn't have her auntie to upset the medical efforts. So things turn and I find myself wondering where our wandering artist may be tonight.....

11762

03511

Friday, May 4th, 1962.

Memorandum:

A beautiful summer's day.

I ran through a flock of mail between jumps today and discover that everyone of them, -- the letters, -- contained some point or other I wanted to check on again and so I shall hold them against another sitting on the morrow.

A letter from Robina states that she and Josephine Means will be down Saturday unless Josephine cannot get away. In that event, Robina and Caroline McClanahan will come down on Wednesday. There was something about some postcards somebody had made for Caroline Dornon, reproducing some of her flower paintings. It is said these will be on the market next week at 10 cents a piece, -- six cards for fifty nine cents. If that figure is correct, it would certainly represent an extraordinary saving of one penny which strikes me as odd. Perhaps my secretary read the figures incorrectly.

The artist came to see me today in quest of sweet basil plants and sunflower seeds. She says she is going to paint a picture of Leaman Davis getting shot last Sunday, -- an account of the shooting in this week's Enterprise. She stated further that she had purchased a car which I hope seemed to be a surprise to me. She says she isn't going to let her teen age grandchildren tear it for her. I'm not at all certain she is wise in that decision for I think they could achieve that act of destruction in about one or two turns, thereby saving the artist not only the upkeep of the thing but giving her a chance to escape tearing up herself and the car, too, if she persists in her determination to operate the vehicle herself.

Carmen called to read me some communications from



11763

Edith Porter, currently in Baden-Baden, following Dublin, Edinburgh London and the Hague. She goes on to Salzburg and thence to Venice for one day, Florence three days, Naples three days, Rome three days, Nice one day, Paris three days and thence home via Cherbourg. God knows there's enough to take up three days of sight-seeing in any of the towns mentioned but at this time of the year, three days in Naples as opposed to one in Venice seems a little odd but I suppose she wants to do Capri's Blue Grotto, Pompeii and so on. I cannot eradicate from my mind the question as to why a lady who has retired and has the balance of her life with nothing to do should make such a whiz of a trip in swallowing Europe in a month. I suppose it is the pressure of the tourist group, made up of breakneck speeders that pulls her along but why she should want to get tangled up with such a crowd in the first place, I cannot imagine unless, as in the case of many another of whom we have heard, everybody making up such a party has a simply darling time as members of such a three ring circus.

James came to see me this afternoon, just at supper time. J. H. insisted he sup with us which he did but withal sparingly since he was having to take Kay and I. S. Willard to dinner tonight. He said Kay seems to be thriving on the lady doctor's limited medicine, the word, limited, being the important one since she, the lady doctor, persuaded her patient to shelve all the quantities of stuff she has been consuming for just how long is anybody's guess.

The S. G.'s departed after dinner at noon. The lady spent too much of the morning with me and the General asked me for a hana garden tour and liked what he saw and was very nice about saying many a kind word, as is his custom. And so the week runs along and may it be a peaceful weekend in Lyme.....

11764

Sunday, May 6th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Perfect weather and the promise for same throughout the entire week.

With one minor exception, the weekend was pleasant enough. Kay and James had invited me to the camp for 4 p.m. on Saturday. I. S. Willard and Miriam Carver were bidden for 4 o'clock, too. Two seconds before James arrived here to pick me up, Sister blew in with some dull elderly man who with his family is staying at her house. Why she had brought him down here, I wouldn't know. She asked me if I would give him a tour. I would. She asked me if she could get some gourd seeds which would necessitate tearing a lot of gourds to piece. She could. The man was surprisingly odd. He didn't remember ever having heard the word, mulatto, and asked its meaning. Ownership of objects seemed to be his primary interest, not the objects. He would place his hand on the bed in my boudoir, the grand father clock, a chest of draws, etc., etc., and would invariably ask the same question:

"Do these belong to the Estate...."

They did, indeed.

Well, by 4:30 while James waited, we did a round and I got impressively soaked from sweat, tearing gourds apart, etc., etc., and finally I got disentangled from them, crawled into some fresh raiment, and was off to the camp. --exhausted. We should have known I. S. Willard would not have been there but she did arrive sometime between 5 and 6, but while everything went off ever so pleasantly, I found myself utterly bored and was glad when about 8 James could bring me home.

I stopped at the big house to pick up the supper I had asked the cook to leave for me. I knew I would sup at the camp but I like to gather up tidbits for the cats for the weekend. In the dining room,



11765

I discovered somebody, --probably Sister, since I don't like her, had not latched the screen door and there was the big old boxer in the middle of the dining room table having completely finished the food.

I fell into bed on reaching Yucca but awoke within a couple of hours to listen to Texas gubernatorial election returns, delighted that General Walker had run last in the list of 7 or 8 candidates for the Governorship.

The Chapel to the Blessed Martin had been decorated Saturday except for fresh grandiflora magnolias which I rounded up about 4:30 this morning and the place looked quite lovely. I got the 5 a.m. broadcast from Rome, detailing how John the 23rd, had "deceased and nominated" the Blessed Martin to sainthood, after which I retired to the Chapel for half an hour of meditation. About 6 a.m., two of my negro friends put in an appearance. They were looking for some flowers for the Leaman Davis funeral, being held for the victim of the shooting earlier in the past week. It was being held at St. Paul's, across the river from La Beaufort's. I could think of nothing by way of floral tribute more fitting in the eyes of Saint Martin than those gracing his chapel and instinctively I felt he would approve.

At dinner across the fence this noon, I found mine hostess highly nervous and constantly nipping at her husband's every word. She is throwing a party on Tuesday and is always high strung about ever in anticipation of an explosion of sweetness and light on the day the party actually comes off.

This afternoon I again journeyed to the camp to sup with James and Kay. It was all quiet and peaceful and sunset and the lingering twilight over the river so pretty. As we passed Fug, bou's house heading this way, one of the peacock's who was visiting over there let out a wail, strident enough to wake the dead and James observed the bird must have recognized my presence in the neighborhood. At least I was almost dead with drowsiness but perked up quickly enough when I got out and walked through the gardens, shimmering with fireflies, and so to this desk for communion with Lyme

11766

Monday, May 7th, 1962.

Memorandum:

A perfect summer's day, a perfect summer's night.

And, altogether in harmony with the weather is my own state of happiness, what with the postman having handed me letters and packages this morning, including a registered one from Lyme, not to mention the parcel post section. Interruptions got between me and secretarial assistance this evening and so everything now tucked away in the armoire, awaits the morrow when I shall indulge in a pre-natal day season of delight. I should like to express my appreciation to little Miss Lee right now for today's and tonight's happiness which will come into full flower on the morrow.

At coffee this morning, mine hostess suggested we drop everything and dash over across the bridge to call on Father Calahan which is just what we did. We found him sitting in a rocking chair on his front gallery, his left arm in a plaster cast. Before dawn on Sunday morning, the barking off dogs in front of the rectory had disturbed the Reverend Father's rest. Thinking to dispell the racket they were making, he arose and, clad only in pajamas and slippers, took up a stick, walked across his front lawn and across the cattle gap where he slipped and fell, breaking his arm just above the wrist. He felt around and found his lost slippers and returned to the rectory but I can't say what happened to the noisy dogs. With dawn, he journeyed to town and had his arm put in a cast and his skinned knee fixed up and returned to St. Augustin's. I suppose bones of a person 79 years old are leisurely about knitting. In any event, I was glad to see he felt well enough to be up and about and that he felt like strolling with us over to the Church where Celeste wanted me to see a small statue of Saint Martin of Porres atop the confessional.

I don't know if she saw Thursday's Cane River Memo on



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11767

the creating of the saint but her eagerness to have me see the little statue, a replica I gave her mama a few years back, and just like the larger one gracing the Yucca chapel leads me to believe she has forgotten the existence of both. Somehow I got the impression at the time I presented the little statue to Madam Regard that either she or her daughter, in spite of their veneration of Church dignitaries, were shame-faced about having a saint of color in the house and so my gift was passed along to a servant at the time which I thought just perfect all around.

There was a dance-frolic at the local honkey-tonk on Sunday evening about a block up the road from the artist's house. My agents report that the artist permitted her daughter, Jackie, and the latter's son, Junior, to mount her fine new second hand automobile with her, Junior driving, and ride the block or so to the aforesaid honkey-tonk. Once arrived, the artist descended but her daughter and grandson remained in the car. Once inside the honkey-tonk, the artist expressed her satisfaction with life in general by doing a solo dance, much to the amusement of all present. After a snort or two, the artist returned to her car and instructed her grandson to drive her home and, once arrived, ordered him to put the aforesaid conveyance under the sheltering pecan tree and that was that. This first chapter in the saga of the artist's auto seems prosaic enough. I must confess, however, I am already impatient to learn about the second chapter which, I have no doubt will be forthcoming shortly but not disasterously, I trust.

The Enterprise phoned me this afternoon to ask if I wished to have a letter addressed to me in care of the paper, forwarded. I asked that it be opened and read to me. It was of no account but as it came from a Reverend Father of the same order as Saint Martin, written in pursuance of the column, I was pleased. It will appear in the May 10th issue of the paper. And now I fold up my beard, happy and yet impatient for the morrow.....

11768

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Tuesday, May 8th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Pure summer weather.

My natal day eve is so very pleasant, thanks to the envelope and the gift package from Lyme. The card is so lovely and so harmoniously placed in companionship with the message it conveys, as added by little Miss Lee. How redolent with joy life seems as I cast my eye in its direction and my memory repeats the sentiments contained therein.

Within the same envelope I was greeted by a second containing the portraits of the gentleman and about his house which you had mentioned in the more extended greeting and about which I had heard nothing as to what decision had been made regarding it on the Washington level. In view of all the demands that will be laying claims on little Miss Lee in the weeks and months ahead, I am the more touched by the portraits and find myself praying the Lord the transferring of them particularly at just this time may not occasion an untoward pinch.

In logical succession the opening of the package followed hard on the heels of the reading of the messages in the envelope. The package traveled in perfect order and I am perfectly delighted with the steel file which is so convenient of size and so wonderfully suitable for my current needs that I cannot express my delight adequately. And then I found such a delightful time between the weed for me and the feeders for our friends of feathered persuasion.



11769

11769

it was with impatience that I wanted to have a good at  
the whole business and shortly I had done so and  
shall be repeating again and again in times ahead.

I never saw or felt a loulrier mouchoir type than came  
to hand, bearing Lestan's monogram and, after  
tomorrow, this particular package will go slap into  
the armoire for costume implementation (with an i)  
on the first worthy occasion

I suppose little Miss Lee must have been as  
impressed as I with the execution of one of the  
world's greatest edifices and the way the unique  
effect was achieved by the lateration of the  
surface of the likeness so that every column and  
adjoining recess stood out with wonderful clarity.  
Whether this is an old or new treatment to  
obtain the striking effect, I know not but  
I do know that it automatically gave me  
an idea I want to undertake on my own hook eventually.  
In the mean time, I shall be gazing at the creation  
dozen times a day and shall be blessing little  
Miss Lee for having, as so often in the past,  
be praising the good Lord for all the inspirations  
forever flowing this way from Lyme.

It goes without saying, of course, that the  
post brought me the greatest happiness of  
the entire day and my heart is bubbling  
over with gratitude. I am glad that in the  
same day, joy hand in hand with joy, I became  
a grandpa 18 times when the little bantie atop  
the old armoire on the front gallery hatched out 18 of  
the 22 eggs on which she had been parked. I was glad,  
too, that James came along this afternoon so he could see them for  
he had been curious about their diminutive size, having never seen a  
little ones before. Some nuns, --all nurses  
at Cabrini Hospital in Alexandria, also came this way and I  
was happy to entertain them, especially in view  
of that order's kindness to Madam Regard, and naturally they  
loved the grandchildren, just as big as bumble bees.  
And again my thanks for such a joyous natal day eve.....

11770

Wednesday, May 9th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The weather is so mild and lovely  
and tonight's moon so pretty.

So far as having accomplished anything today,  
it would appear I spent most of my energy like  
the squirrel whirling around in his revolving wheel cage,  
going a mile a minute and coming out right where he went in.

Fugabou continues his bout with the bottle, remaining  
at home while the weeds as between Yucca and Ghana continue  
thriving wonderfully since they have only me to contend with.  
But the vegetables continue advancing in spite of a measure  
of neglect and the radishes and mustard greens I  
rounded up before five o'clock this morning were  
bountiful in quantity for the big house and  
across the fence and for a few cabins nearby.

Celeste had a couple of house guests and they wanted to  
do a round between 9 and 11. I conducted the  
tour carry a wand of office in the form of a pictorial map  
of Louisiana, rolled up in a mailing tube, which  
Celeste had presented as a natal day gift.

James arrived about 1, bearing gifts from  
the Walkers and from Kay and himself. The Walker  
gift was food, the Register presents chairs, --  
an ultra modern office chair for my desk and a little  
low armchair in rose for the living room. The office chair  
introduces a somewhat odd note into my boudoir and while  
utilitarian and comfortable, I must say  
that I am so accustomed after 20 some odd years to the old  
hand made ante bellum chair I am so accustomed to, it will take  
me a little while to get into the swing of the  
new one whose functional lines metallic frame and contemporary  
leather imitation accoutrements will eventually be  
softened somewhat by the draping of an old fabric over same.

Robina and Caroline McClanahan, who is Carrie's



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nice arrived a little after 1 while James was on the front gallery and I was on the 'phone, responding to a call from Juanita A. reporting that she and Joe were taking off for Washington this week for a 10 day go-round. I was glad James was there to greet the ladies and as he and Hobina had not seen each other in years, they were both glad to pick up the thread of conversation for they get along nicely together. James remained until 3 when he went to the camp and the ladies walked around the gardens a bit. They departed at 4 and James returned a few minutes later to pick me up and whisk me to town to sup at home with Kay and him. They brought me back here around 8 and here I am.

On Friday the Registers drive to Shreveport and will spend the night at a fancy motel there and on Saturday morning Kay will board a plane for Charleston. She and Aunt "illie and Mrs. Crabtree with I then motor to the Asheville, N. C. area where they will pause for a couple of weeks at a sanitarium there. There is something about the jaunt to Asheville and so many of the other journeys that bring to mind the unending travels of the merchant-planter, stemming from a nervous energy that cannot contain itself and must manifest some expenditure of physical effort regardless. In both cases I can think of lots of things to absorb such energies, were they applied to a limited field but concentration on a line of endeavor within a circumscribed area appears irksome to such people and exploration of vast distances an imperfect substitute that is applied to avoid things closest to hand.

As for my natal day and its manifold expressions of remembrances, I think I find inordinate delight, surpassing almost everything, in the exquisite little container and its contents in the pastilles section. I took same to bed with me last night and it remains on my nighttable by the radio, awaiting me when I draw down the shades on the wrapping up of today's activities. There is something about the loveliness of the design of the cover and the sweetness of the pastilles that somehow brings Lyme so very close and evokes so much gratitude of the heart to God for this latest evidence of a

11772

03711

Thursday, May 10th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and mild with 90 by day and 70 by night.

Natalie's secretary or housegirl called me this morning, saying her mistress had to give up trying to get me on the 'phone, which shows what my attachment to weeding en erprises can lead me into losing. She said her mistress wanted to remind me that the wives of the Federal Land Bank Presidents were being entertained in Hatchitoches today and that after lunching at the Country Club, they would be visiting Oakland first and Melrose second, arriving here around 4:30. I called Natalie at the Country Club at luncheon time, asking her to switch the visitations so that Oakland would come second rather than first. I did so on the firm conviction that such a party would always be behind schedule and I certainly didn't want them blowing in here at 5 o'clock supper time. The new arrangement was concluded and Carmen called me at 1:45, saying they were at that moment on the point of stepping into their cars and would arrive between 2:15 and 2:30. I said that was fine and wasn't at all surprised when they blew in a quarter after 3 and I rejoiced I had changed the agenda.

Natalie came with them as sort of hostess and Carmen in costume that looked mighty wilted, came along, too. Between the front gate where I met them and the big oak, I realized I had a bunch of dumb bunnies on hand and as the tour progressed it got duller and duller. The wives of Federal Land Bank Presidents should never include this bend of the river on their tours. I got no response out of my efforts in the big house. Ghana left them cold, only four carried to see the African House murals and nobody paid much attention to the Yucca boudoir and before I had pointed out a couple of items which usually interest even the casual pilgrims, such as the grand-father clock in its case of blond mahogany, fashioned by



SWVII

11773

a forgotten slave carpenter, some of my guests had wandered off into the living room. I shepherded the rest into that room, gave them a quick look around with no intention of taking them to the back gallery, the chapel and so on, and I was right in deciding not to do that since two or three of the ladies had already gone out on the front gallery before I had mentioned more than a couple of tresors in that living room. I followed suit and on the gallery Natalie asked if cokes were available at the store. I said they were and that I was sorry the pressure of the party was such that I had not found time to serve cokes in the house as I had expected to do. It is seldom one finds a whole bunch of bags so wooden and I felt sorry, in a way, for them, their hostess and myself since it appeared to be a loss for everyone concerned.

I was glad to see James appear after the bankers' bags had departed. He and Kay go to Shreveport on the morrow and immediately after she flies off for the Bluff at 8 a.m., he plans to return to the land of the Hatchitoches and he expects to spend most of his time at the camp during the next two weeks to two months or however long Kay and la Storm remain at Ashville. Although depressed about the conditions that undoubtedly will reveal Kay to be in poorer health when she returns, he has a marvelous way of keeping a happy frame of mind on other aspects of life. As he will spend both his nights as well as his days at the camp, I suppose I shall see a great deal of him and I shall do what I can to keep the sun shining as brightly as I can.

Like so many of their feathered counterparts, the male peacocks find themselves at that place in the calendar when fighting seems to be the order of the day and one male spends the major part of the day trying to trounce the other, chasing him all over the place and from every limb of the big oak, across the magnolias in their upper branches and halting only long enough to scream with a volume so piercing that it can be heard for several miles. I reckon the neighbors are tired of the racket but I get so accustomed to it, I scarcely notice it.

Everybody loves the little banties and I sent six of them to town this evening to the clerk's boy who is anxious to try raising some. That leaves the mama with a dozen and two more prospective mamas expected to swell the number of feathered neighbors any day now. I am giving others to Clementine, Doreatha, Fugabou and so on, and I hope they all have as much luck as I with them.....

11774

SWVII

Friday, May 11th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Pure summer.

Thanks to the fine weather, the cotton continues thriving, the hoe hands keep on swinging their instruments across the cotton fields and the banties keep right on setting.

In spite of the dry spell of late, the grass keeps right on growing, both in the hay fields and in the gardens. Olite, son of the late Aze, usually takes care of the lawns but for a couple of weeks now, he has been stuck in the hay fields and Ida Red is pushing the power motor across the greenswards. Ida Red, sometimes in the role of girl, sometimes in the role of boy, has been effecting men's garb of late and has been courting a young lady, the latter obviously a female if one isn't so sure of her courtier. Ida Red complained to me today that his girl friend had torn three shirts off his back in as many recent weeks. It must be a somewhat rough courtship for Ida Red broke his girl friend's arm last weekend, so boistrously do they battle in the game of love.

As for Fugabou, he continues fighting the bottle with the bottle seeming to be maintaining the upper hand thus far this week. I hold the thought that by Monday the money will all have been spent which may be one incentive for Fugabou to get back on the job but by then there will probably be need for more assistance in the hay field and so I cannot count much of vegetable garden help from that quarter.

Ida Red, of course, is one of those rare fusions of sex which the Greeks described as a fusion of Hermes and Aphrodite and sometimes I wish the male peacocks were more like Ida Red. By that I do not mean to imply I wish they would break their girl friend's arm but a little less male might bring about less rumpus as between the two male birds, --such pretty



11775

birds to look at, so unpleasant to listen to. This morning about 5, one could see the silhouette of the bigger one outlined atop the African House in solitary grandeur and incessantly hollerin' in strength that must have carried half way to Natchitoches. I suppose he will get over his feud with the other male peacock in a week or so but until then both day and night is going to echo to the screaming. The hen, I believe has begun laying and possibly setting but I haven't discovered where as yet. She pays no attention to either of the male noise-makers and only occasionally emerges from his sequestered hiding place I hope the boys wear themselves out long before the hen brings forth her offspring which, I suppose, will be at least a full month hence at the very earliest.

Carmen called me this morning to compare notes on the wives of the Federal Land bankers. She said she had never felt so frustrated as she did at close of day when she had finally divested herself of them for she said her efforts to entertain them, even as Lucille Prudhomme at Oakland and I down here, had all failed utterly and she felt all of us justified in feeling resentful at the waste of time and energy that had been expended on them. I believe it was R. B. who entertained the bankers themselves, for I think R. B. may be President of the local Federal Land Bank, and if so, it undoubtedly fell to Natalie to dine them at the country club, engineer the Old Lemee House reception and the ensuing Cane River hejira. If so, she must be feeling mighty washed out by the futility of everybody's efforts to strike at least one little spark of interest. I really feel sorry for Natalie in having had to shoulder the full weight of such a rare assortment of dullards and I find myself wishing I had tried a little harder to dispense hospitality even though none of the guests seemed conscious of the common effort being made on all sides to make their day in the Natchitoches country pleasant.

I was impressed by one thing Carmen told me and that was that when the party reached Oakland, XF Natalie never really get out of her car but simply sat there and waited while the guests riding with her did the rounds and returned to the car, which, it was stated, did not take long. One thing is probably certain, the guests were undoubtedly as happy to be rid of all of us, even as we were to see the last of them.....

11776

Sunday, May 13th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Summer and moving from mild to hot and quite dry.

I liked the calm obtaining in these parts and I was delighted with the visitor or two putting in an appearance.

Saturday was especially delightful because the morning post brought a dandy letter from Lyme, together with enclosures that interested me no end. The accounts of little Miss Lee's hurly-burly as departure day grows closer make me hope that there will be a measure of rest and relaxation when she reaches the other side and that somewhere while there, she may pick up some extra strength as against the mountain of things to be untangled when she once more finds herself back at Lyme.

It was so characteristically thoughtful of her to send along the address of a mutual friend and the notations regarding the editorial pages of the Enterprise, the best dates to cease and to resume communications and so forth.

The clippings are wonderful, especially the details given the canonization of the Blessed Martin all of which I have gone over with so much interest. Of course I had not heard of the death of the Oklahoma City "Proud Possessor", and the arrival of the clipping demonstrated for the billionth time how wonderful is little Miss Lee. I thought Ames might enjoy reading the article, as he used to go to Oklahoma City frequently when he lived at Norman. He had brought some editorials he wanted to share with me and so, before supper, we read the clippings and I was delighted with points of the Gilcrease mansion-museum. He said there was one section consisting of four or five very large rooms, one after another and each having a step or two, up or down, underlining the separation. He recalled the walls being decorated with outstanding paintings by masters who recorded Indian likenesses, and pedestals around each room, topped by bronzes of excellent design. He said the University of Oklahoma Indian style shows were held there annually, too.



11777

I was happy to hear Natalie's voice this morning on the phone. She mentioned the grand letter she had received from little Miss Lee who was, as usual, doing wonderful things for her by way of shopping for tickets, etc., etc. A while back I had told her to keep me in mind in regard to James' birthday the last day of this <sup>month</sup> morning, suggesting that something personal might be nice, perhaps some little gadget like a pen or some such. She said she had found something and would like to bring it down this afternoon. She arrived at 1:30, bearing a big package, beautifully wrapped as a gift. It turned out to be two reclining chairs for the camp, precisely like a couple they already have at the camp. The camp can absorb a couple of extra ones and I shall be ~~xxx~~ returning two chairs in place of the two I received from James and Kay for my birthday and thus that will all come out even. Natalie was also bearing a huge birthday cake as of May 9th and it really is beautiful. We chatted for about an hour, covering a wide range of subjects,-- quite a bit about her European jaunt and so on. She gave me town news that may or may not have some foundation of truth. I hope not but in view of all that has gone before, there may be something to it. She said a negro and wife, working for the Catholic school in town, consulted with the sisters and the priest there about a home they had purchased from Pat sometime back on which they had paid monthly instalments. After a year or so, they found they had paid only 12 dollars and the rest had gone to other charges. The matter was taken up with Natalie's husband who called Pat and told him he was shocked by such doings. Pat said it was all normal business transactions and that he would like to bring his books for Natalie's husband to see but he said he didn't want to see them because 8 percent interest on money was one thing for a year but 8 percent per month was something else. I didn't tell Natalie but this gossip did recall the time when Pat was a little or perhaps a big boy, say 12 years old or so, and how he spent the d his mama in Alexandria and how the latter had told him that the only thing of primary importance in this world is money and that he should always strive to see he rounded up a plenty.

James came this afternoon about 4:30 and we went to the camp where we supped. He said just before he started over here, a big old truck drove in to the camp, bearing Horace, Ed. Rand and another man. Their purpose was to carry away the big old butane tank they had left there since January 1st. They got it alright but I think Horace should have phoned or dropped James a line, asking if such an operation would disturb him on a Sunday afternoon. Were the Registers like the Rands, they would have had a flock of guests and such an engineering chore would not have been in order in the middle of a Sunday afternoon.....

11778

Monday, May 14th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Summer is upon us and the New Orleans radio is beginning to talk about drought in the central and northern sections of the State. I'm beginning to want to dampness for the Ghana vegetables but at supper tonight, J. H. was expressing the hope it wouldn't rain for at least another week. According to the weather Bureau, he is more likely to get his wish than am I.

Juanita A. called me Sunday morning to say that if convenient for me, she would like to come down today to get some plants. When I responded affirmatively, she suggested I not mention the fact across the fence, since she and Juanita B. would probably come together and if my neighbor were not warned in advance of their arrival, they might save a lot of time by thus avoiding a "must" round of coffee and whatnot.

At 9 o'clock coffee, mine hostess asked me if I had heard from Juanita A. Naturally I lied and responded negatively. Mine hostess said she thought it so strange that Juanita A. would come down for plants without advising me in advance. I responded that Juanita A. indeed had mentioned coming for Giant's Beard a week ago and that I had told her I wouldossen the stuff so she might pick it up any old time. Mine hostess said that Juanita B. had called her Sunday afternoon to say she and Juanita A. would be down sometime Monday morning. I wish those girls would agree on their stories before they get me tied up in lying for them individually or jointly.

And so, about mail time, both ladies arrived and got their plants, Juanita B. wanting twice as much as Juanita A. and there was much digging and much sweating on my part and they finally drove off, their Folkswagon loaded like something heading out for Noah's ark.

My day otherwise was busy with my own pursuits at gardening and I made it a point to drop everything when 6:30 arrived so I could get the evening news casts. Returning from Ghana quite adrip, I found James



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awaiting me at Yucca. He says he is staying at the camp for a few days. He remained until after 8 and what I don't know about what is going on in the world will or would fill many an hour of radio time. He said that if I could join him on either Saturday or Sunday night, he would like to invite Mr. and Mrs. Walker down for 4 p.m., to remain to sup, and said he would appreciate it if I would mention it to them, should I have occasion to be talking with them in between times. I inquired if the invitation was to include Mrs. Walker's mother and the 12 year old Ken Walker, junior. He said he really hadn't had them in mind but it would be alright if they came. I shall relay the invitation as for Mr. and Mrs. Walker. Period. One 12 year old with five grown-ups at a camp supper isn't my idea of the Emily Post tradition. Since the 12 year old would be bored with us and we with him in view of the remote control exerted over his rambunctious vitality.

From out of no where, it suddenly occurs to me I had better knock off a column one of these days about the post cards Caroline's niece has had printed carrying a likeness of a Dormon sketch of a flower on six different cards. I know perfectly well the cards will never sell but the least I can do, I guess, is to sound a trumpet in praise of Miss Dormon generally, using the cards as the excuse for the column. Such a column will be dull enough and probably ought to find its way into print about a week hence for I have already written one for this week Thursday's issue although, for the life of me, I cannot recall on what subject but vaguely it seems to me it was wonderfully dull when knocked off. I shall not dwell on the post cards, of course, but simply mention they exist and where they may be purchased in town. My point in doing the column, of course, is to make a gesture in the direction of Carrie's niece for having had the cards made but primarily to present Louisiana's most notable flower-girl, as Carrie certainly is, with a little bouquet in hopes it may please her.....

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Tuesday, May 15th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Summer but with a surprising show of clouds in late afternoon, bringing a pin-point drizzle lasting about 2 minutes. Half hour later the sun was out again and tonight the moon hasn't some much as a wisp of a cloud to share the heavens with her.

Natalie called tonight about 7. She didn't have anything in particular to say other than that she had enjoyed her little Sunday visit, even as did I. She said the real reason she called was to share a line with me she had found in some poem:

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"Evening lasted all afternoon....."

I told her it somehow reminded me of the line she once heard the artist toss off:

"Gray is for sad....."

James was supposed to come for noon dinner or evening supper but he never did put in an appearance although he was at the camp last night and through today. One of my agents reported him at the artist's house this afternoon but perhaps that visit impelled him to chase to town to get some white paint for her. She called me at noon to say she was doing a picture for him but had run out of white paint.

The artist told me she wasn't very busy, having only three pictures to paint for some lady somewhere or other and two for Mr. Pipes. The majority of artist finding themselves possessed of half a dozen orders would probably count themselves right in the swing of prosperity but a half dozen orders means nothing at all to the artist, and probably even less so, now that she keeps a car under her favorite pecan tree.



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Natalie in this evening's conversation, mentioned that there had been a lot of racket in the leaves going on under her window nightly and eventually she discovered an armadillo had dug a big hole there right where a cape jessamine bush flourished until the animal finished off the roots, thereby finishing the bush. She said the noise of dogs last night impelled her son, John, to investigate with a flashlight and a huge armadillo was stalking about the place. I was sorry I had to report that there was not the only such animal about since another section of the front gallery here at Yucca sagged today, what with those worthless animals digging madly under the pavement and to what point I cannot imagine and I doubt if they know. A dog with an ounce of sense would worry them away from a residence but the local hound has no sense and when anything from an armadillo to a hog appears, he thinks it is time to play and he goes on a frolic with them and they apparently enjoy the companionship.

While Natalie was on the wire, the two peacocks, one on the African House roof, the other atop Yucca, began shouting at each other. Soe piercing, as you know, is the sound of their voices that Natalie paused to ask which member of my menagerie was making such an undignified section, it would seem there will be a fine assortment of tomatoes from which to select one's preference before long. I spent some time this afternoon tearing up into long bandage-like strips some old sheets, using the aforesaid bandages to tie up the tomato plants, using bamboo sticks, driven into the ground, to supply the means of keeping the plants off the ground thereby preserving the fruit from staying on the ground and going to pieces. Some of the tomatoes are already the size ofantie eggs and give promise to being ready for eating within another 3 or 4 weeks. I am impatient to pluck the first one and taste the wonderful flavor that only the vine-ripened one offer.

So spins the day and so I must spin a few letters and then fold up my beard against another day.....

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08511

Wednesday, ay 16th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Pure summer.

A pleasant breeze out of the southwest tempered today's heat which wasn't much above 90 but warm enough when working in sunshine to make it seem warmer. I got a lot of little odds and ends attended to, or partially so, such as tying up tomato vines where I left off yesterday, getting a flock of gourd vines heading skyward on bamboo poles and off the ground where, if left to themselves, they pick up too many bugs to smite them, not to mention no end of hoeing, correspondence and so on.

A very pleasant young lady and gentleman interrupted my morning by asking for a look at things. They hailed from some place about 100 miles north of London and what they were doing in Louisiana, I didn't ask, being intent on giving them the look they wanted and then speeding them on their way so I could get back to whatever I was doing.. Later, I encountered J. H. at the store and he asked me how I liked the people and I said they appeared alright to me. He said he thought they must be fine people as they were traveling in a Cadillac of contemporary vintage.. I must say, although he doesn't give the impression, J. H. is probably more impressed by somebody in a Cadillac than in a wheelbarrow toward which I usually incline although the Lord knows there are fools and sages enough to be found in either.

I was lucky enough to get some help from Andy in some horticultural efforts I was pursuing this afternoon but I had to leave most of it to Andy, much to my regret, for I wanted to lend aid and direction. James appeared when I was standing on my head or some such and quite a-drip with sweat and greeted me with a "Don't let me interrupt you...."

He mentioned having seen J. H. when he arrived and the



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latter had urged him to stay to supper, all of which resulted in cooking the balance of my gardening activities, although, thanks to the presence of a waxing moon over the Ghana garden, I was able after eight o'clock to return and finish some tidying up by moonlight.

This reminds me of something Kay remarked a couple of weeks ago when I declined with thanks some proffered trip into the country or a jaunt to Texas or some such:

"I thought we moved to Hatchitoches so that we might see you often but it seems as though we so seldom do much more than before!"

I was interested in the first part of the sentence, -- a decision made without consulting me, and I thought the latter part slightly exaggerated. Be that as it may, after more than 20 years of getting an existence rigged up, I haven't the slightest intention of shelving it without much pondering, especially when the primary point would be to assist people with time to kill on their hands when I seem to have so many projects I should like to devote myself.

I was interested in doings by furred and feathered friends along the front gallery this afternoon. One of the black cats was stretched out full length along the edge of the gallery pavement while the mama bantie with her flock of little children strolled along the greensward adjoining the gallery. I tossed them some food in the form of corn bread and mama and the children went after it with gusto but Tom was too hot to bother with food. The little ones, after they had had all they wanted, disdained what was left and found a new form of fun in jumping up on Tom's tummy and sliding down and Tom never so much as flicked an ear. Then a peacock, sensing food near the spot, started in the direction of Tom and the children whereupon little old mama bantie jumped on the peacock and the latter retreated, astounded at the on-slaught.....

11784

Thursday, ay 17th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and warm with a promise of a widely scattered shower that never did develop. Along about first dark this evening, there was a great blustering in the skies, wind blowing in strong gusts and clouds tumbling all over each other. The crack of doom might well have been expected to sound at any time during the uproar, immediately after which the breeze vanished and the clouds with it, with never so much as a drop of rain falling. The skies are now as clear as a bell and the moon wonderful.

The American Medical Association continues blanketing the air waves with propaganda against Mr. Kennedy's proposed Care for the Aged plan. I know nothing about the merits of the bill but in the President favors it and A. M. A. opposes it, I, naturally, am in favor of it.

Somehow it strikes me as the old, old story of the dumbness of people in one line of endeavor when they find themselves in another field. I am thinking of Henry Ford in the 1930's, testifying before a Senate Committee and declaring the United States would bankrupt itself if it borrowed a billion dollars. I'm thinking, too, how A. M. A. fought hospital insurance tooth and nail, only to be delighted with the thing, once it had passed, and the doctors discovered they could get more money out of the patient since his hospitalization was taken care of by the insurance the doctors had so wildly opposed. And now the A. M. A. is having spasms about the impending health for the aged currently in the legislative hopper and I, for one, am holding the thought the thing will be enacted. The spokesman for A. M. A., some gentleman from Florida, is forever proclaiming on the air that everybody he knows over 65 has ample funds to take care of medical needs. Verily his circle of acquaintances must be limited.

Mrs. Walker called tonight to say her husband had to be in Baton Rouge this weekend and therefore they would have to withdraw their acceptance of the invitation, issued on behalf of the camp on Sunday afternoon. Perhaps Ken, junior, and his grandma, Mrs. Genung, may be



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the invitations might be issued by the host so that the question of substitutes might be settled by the host directly. I, personally, should have been just as happy if the invitation might have been withheld until Kay and James could receive the guests but I suppose nobody, most of all James, knows ~~the~~ when Kay will be coming back from the Carolinas. Her progress at the North Carolina hospital will depend on several factors, too, and, unfortunately many of those elements having little or nothing to do with the patient directly. A letter from Kay to James indicates Aunt Willie arrived with retinue just after Kay had gone through her preliminary examination and was supposed to be flattened out and quiet. It seems Aunt Willie has quiet an elaborate agenda all ready for excursions, --trips for herself and Kay to various people living in, around and about North Carolina, -- calls and overnight visits to Winston-Salem, Wilmington, and a flock of regions all over the place I never heard of. If I may say so, such high jinks don't sound to me like the ideal program for Kay who is supposed to be a patient not a pilgrim. I must say I can readily appreciate the determination on the part of James to take a determined stand against being a party to all this sort of tomfoolery.

I didn't see James today. J. H. said he had seen him this morning and invited him to join us at dinner but James had apparently had to go to town and he didn't put in an appearance here at supper although he was at the camp, it is said. My own afternoon was fairly busy with a flock of chores and I was glad when I could divest myself of soaking rainment and jump into a tub at close of day.

A letter from Rudolph speaks of his active life and remarks how cordial Celeste always is with her invitations to him to come over here for a visit. Celeste serves him a cup of coffee at 9 a.m., thereupon setting him adrift for me to entertain the balance of the visit. I cannot make any reference to aforesaid invitations in my acknowledgement of his letter.

Mrs. Spinks 'phoned from town last night. She was over from Crockett, looking for an apartment for her son, Johnny, currently completing his freshman year in some Texas college and going to summer school in Hatchitoches. Will we have aco grill

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Friday, May 18th 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudless skies, with a temperature around 89 during day, tempered by Gulf breezes that vanished with sunset, leaving the warmth in large measure and a magnificent moon.

And having written the above, I paused to answer the 'phone. J. H. was calling from his house to say Sister had just called him to say she would be down with some people on Saturday afternoon and asking if I could give them a tour. I could.

In the morning I shall be having the Sheriff's wife, whose name is Cathelene or some such Morris, and her sister, Lenore, of Texas. I suppose she isn't the "lost Lenore" of whom Edgar Allen Poe used to sing.

Throw in some uninitiated hoe hands, fresh out of the cotton patch at dawn on the morrow, gentlemen who can't tell a gourd vine from a weed, and it looks as though my day will prepare me in large bulk for supper at the camp.

The Sunday night supper for the Walkers is off for this coming Sunday, what with Mr. Walker in Baton Rouge and the second Walker car in an uncertain condition. I reckon James would have gladly gone to town, picked up the lady, her mama and the and taken them back again but let the matter stand when the car business was mentioned, thinking a Sunday evening supper would be more of a success with four grown-ups than with five of such varying ages.

James came to see me around six when I was putting some finishing touches on Ghana gardening. He brought



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two or three books with him, recently received from Marlboro. He read at some length from one which found unusually interesting. I believe the title, a poor title, is *The Spanish Town Papers*, which does nothing for my imagination. As I recall, the author is a Mrs. Arnot Robertson. But the treatment of the material is alright and the papers are wonderful. It seems that the "Spanish town" is Kingston, Jamaica. During the American Revolution, lots of ships, perhaps a thousand, taken by opposing forces, were taken into Kingston where their papers of all sorts, log books, mail and so on, were turned over to the Court. The judge in matters of captured ships got nothing if the ship were set free, and therefore it seldom if ever was thus turned loose. The standard convicting testimony for assured condemnation was that somebody testified that he saw ship's papers thrown overboard as the boat was being docked. Thus the ships were almost always confiscated and the contents and boat itself sold as prize money from which the judge got a substantial cut. All the papers were impounded and nothing was ever done about them until just recently when the author obtained access to them, after years, -- about 200, of rough treatment that must have destroyed more than half. Personal letters to and from private citizens, here explored for the first time, are surprisingly wistful and one wonders about the people to whom they were addressed who never received them. There is at least one letter by George Washington to somebody. I think the bulk dates between 1776 to the early 1800's. Papers reveal lots of points about cargo, including one boat, manned by 43 seamen with Captain, not to mention a cargo of 683 slaves. There is reference to the number of slaves who by some miracle survived the voyage from Africa, only to die of starvation in Jamaica where there seems to have been a great food shortage some of the time at least. I gather from the hop, skip and jump method of going through the book that it sometimes happened that an English boat would capture another English boat and take it into Kingston for the inevitable confiscation, suggesting that, even as in other times, money was more important than patriotism both for capturer and for judge.

And so much for *The Spanish Town Papers* and the hour advances and I must do a few little chores, take a brief turn in the moonlight through hana and thence to my pillow

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Sunday, May 20th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continued hot and dry.

A bowl of gardenias grace my desk, nodding approvingly with each tap of this keyboard as I pen this line to little Miss Lee. I wish they were on her desk instead of mine so their fragrance could suggest how the telepathy is working.

Saturday was a shambles so far as Sister and her Shreveport associates were concerned in their visit here. H. had said she would arrive at 1:30 or 2. She blew in after 3, bring 8 or 10 people. I had made an appointment with James to pick me up for the camp at 4. And so we did a tour, followed by no end of hubbub at the big house about serving coffee. There was a heap of chatter about some mighty expensive berries, brought primarily for J. but there would be some for me. Very graciously I announced I didn't care for any and that statement on any subject always puzzles and confounds her. Yes, I simply had to have some and so a double d was prepared, heaping up a large vegetable dish.

At that magical moment, some of the remaining residents of Shreveport who hadn't come with the first batch, arrived. I was asked if I would give another tour, it then being 4 o'clock. I would. Sister thought I had better take the berries with me but why they couldn't be left in the big house ice box, wasn't clear. Well, if I didn't want to take them with me, she would bring them over to my house later. I would take them with me and much was said about the amplitude of the gift, -- by the donor, of course. And so we set out, the second contingent and I. We got as far as Ghana where I placed them on the table by the window, and before we got out of that place, the table had been elevated so demonstrated how it might serve as blinds, a Lo!...the berries flew out of the window, smashing the big bowl and scattering berries all over the place, -- outside.



11789

11789

that was a great waste of breath for they couldn't wait to get back to the big house where Sister was dispensing coffee to spill all the berries. Five minutes later, one of her big house guests was delegated to bring me not one but two big dishes of berries to replace the first batch. Fortunately James and I were able to head out without getting entangled by the Shreveport contingent and found ourselves in the quiet of the camp along about 5 o'clock.

This morning about 6, Andy came to 'phone his uncle in Hatchitoches and as he and his brother who live along below the spillway where the artis dwelt in former times, and as they both like berries, I was so happy to include the whole shooting match with the other things from the garden which Andy felt would stand him and Albert in good stead in the food section.

This afternoon Kay called from Ashville, N. C., and James and I talked with her. She seemed to be feeling alright and says she is returning here on the 28th, after Aunt illie has enjoyed her Ashville vacation. I had supposed that Kay was to be the patient in the North Carolina go-round but I am not certain about it and perhaps neither she nor her auntie needs as much physical treatment as Psychiatry.

The dizziness of Saturday was increased somewhat by the number of people the college sent on the assumption down here I had nothing to do but receive people. On Saturday morning I had two or three bags by appointment and no this Sabbath morning, J. H. didn't seem able to think of anything better to do than to drag some weekend guests at a camp by the spillway to get up before breakfast to come here for a tour. As the camp guests didn't breakfast until 10, they had ample opportunity to explore the old plantation in advance of the breaking of their bread, and they didn't seem to mind about taking up my time even though they were interested in nothing about what they encountered. And so turned the local weekend and although I am glad it is over, it really wasn't so bad.....

11790

11790

Monday, May 21st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot, dry and a pleasant breeze.

At long last, Louella got herself a new Low Paul today and I hold the thought there may be years of wedded bliss stretching out before them.

Low Paul is a rather large gander, taller than Louella, and is easily distinguished from her lily whiteness by the fact that although Low Paul, too, is white in large measure, he does have a couple of dark gray, almost black spots in the general neighborhood of his tail.

Doreatha drove back to Little River this afternoon and got the gander from her mama. Half a mile down the highway, where the Little River road joins, she saw Andy coming toward Melrose. She picked him up and he brought it to me. We clipped one wing and cut the rope tying his legs and turned him loose in the pen under the magnolia, hard by the sugar pot. Louella and the ducks were standing around, primarily interested, it would seem, in the cracked corn they probably thought I had concealed about my person. They were right and as soon as Low Paul was freed, I tossed out some corn for the old residents of the place and their new associate. It was all a little too strange and different for the newly arrived and he be-took himself off into a far corner while Andy went on his way and I back to the vegetables. A little later I was surprised and disappointed to note that Low Paul had deserted his new playmates and had wandered over to my point of operations. I sauntered behind him back to la basse-cour and tossed out some more corn and some bread, casting some inside the enclosure for all the ducks and Louella and an occasional gesture on the other side of fence for the new-comer. At first dark Low Paul was nestling beneath the magnolia, close against the picket fence separating him from Louella. At dawning I shall turn out the ducks and Louella for a romp in the dew and I feel quite certain Low Paul by then will feel himself a confirmed member of the webbed foot battalion.

It was a day of peace around and about and I enjoyed



OCVII

11791

the return to normal vibrations obtaining about the place. At 9 o'clock coffee, I learned something from mine hostess that seems quaint. Mine hostess mentioned that Joe and Juanita A had indeed taken off for Washington by car and added that before leaving Juanita A. had called her to ask if she could dispose, that is to say, give away for her, the clothing her mama, Mrs. Anderson, had been possessed of at the time of her death. Mrs. Anderson was a very small woman, probably less than 5 feet in height for for years, I believe, weighing sometime like 80 some pounds. When Miss Cammie died, she, like Mrs. Anderson, I imagine, was not possessed of an extensive wardrobe and, like Mrs. Anderson, I believe, the clothing was modest of pattern and cut. In Miss Cam's case, it was thought she would have approved having her thin's go to old neighbors, such as good old Celine Roogue, etc., etc., and they were indeed thus passed along for use by those who could use them to heartening advantage. I nearly swallowed my demi-tasse this morning, however, when Celeste confided that Juanita A. had requested that the clothing of Mrs. Anderson be given to white people only..

What with James' birthday in the offing, -- the 31st, -- and what with his recent giving away of books, I gave up the notion of purchasing one for his natal day gift. As Natalie knows the Pecan Park establishment and James, too, I thought I would impose upon her good nature to select something for me when, on receipt of an invitation to her son's graduation, I rec'd an invitation to that doings, leaving it to her to decide whatever for her son's gift and for James. For the son, she invested in a shirt and for James a dab of camp furniture which, although I did not tell her, I found just perfect since it is exactly the same thing he has already purchased on his own hook for the camp, indicating clearly enough that he liked the type and, I tell myself, a camp never has too many chairs.....

11792

OCVII

22nd  
Tuesday, May 22nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Sunny and hot during the day with a pleasant breeze that goes down with the sun.

I spent the morning on the end of a hoe in the vegetable section, impressed with every swing at the pert appearance of grass, weeds, vegetables and flowers in spite of the fact there hasn't been any rain in a couple of weeks. Some of the tomato plants are developing fruit the size of golf balls and the zinnias from the seeds forwarded by little Miss Lee are already a foot and a half high and putting out a fine color chart of flowers. I mentioned how pretty the zinnias were looking when at coffee this morning and mine hostess could believe there could be flowers this early in the season. Some of the pepars of the red hot variety are already a couple of inches in length and the belle pepar are in full flower, promising a substantial production in that department of which I am very fond.

The corcomb starts more leisurely and for the most part, the plants are only a couple of inches out of the ground. Their giant blossoms are usually well formed by mid summer, blossoms sometimes measuring 10 or 12 inches in the comb-like spread at the top of stalks four or five feet in height. I laugh every time I encounter the unexplainable urge manifested by some of the tiny plants, -- a couple of inches in height, which, for reasons best known to themselves, occasionally put on a brave display of color by putting out brilliant flowers prematurely, even as some are doing right now.

I returned to Yucca, all a-drip about 11:25 and splashed through a quick bath and some dry clothing and was surprised and pleased to see James make a round. He remained for dinner, departing about 12:45, giving me an opportunity to return for another round in the hoe-swinging department.



11793

11793

Tonight a little before 7, a call came in from I. S. Willard. She said she was pressed for time and so wouldn't be able to talk much and, indeed, she had finished by four minutes before 8 o'clock. She was in a new role and one that doesn't become her to great advantage. She started off by saying she wanted to bring me a sketch on the morrow, --something she had undertaken last January. I told her I should be delighted to see her. She appeared unhinged by my cordiality and waxed highly nervous, explaining she couldn't understand either James or me in having taken the attitude we had in neglecting a friend for so long. I don't remember when she was a guest at the camp but it must have been about a month ago. At the time she was so busy contending with her 1959 income tax that she didn't have time for anything, explaining at the time she really didn't have time for anything any more and wouldn't until the income tax thing was out of the way. On the strength of that I haven't called her to learn if she might be at home contending with her papers or in the big road, feeling, as in my own case when I am pressed for time that it is at once a courtesy and a kindness for people to give me a chance to get out of the way whatever chances to be biting me. But I. S. Willard, it seems, has worked herself into a belief that she has been wilfully neglected and did quite a bit of sputtering, --an extravagance in which she should never indulge herself. She leaves for New Orleans on the morrow and says she will stop off here for a moment "in the morning" which may be any time between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. In short, I. S. Willard is a sight.

I find myself sleepy tonight and I hold the thought any town folk I may know will have the courtesy to "neglect" me as soon as I fold up.....

11794

11794

Wednesday, May 23rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hazy and hot.

As this memo goes forward on the 24th, I take it from previous calculations by little Miss Lee, it had better be the final one until it is resumed once more, following a two month interlude. Little Miss Lee, accordingly, may count this as the final one and thus be saved any pressure about picking up data from this quarter during the last and inevitably hectic moments before departure.

It goes without saying, of course, that the Department of Mental Telepathy, however, will go right along functioning as usual, and every day a memo will find its way into the gay little metallic file, all of which will be held against delivery in deep summer. I hold the thought that the traveler will devote just as much time as possible to rest and relaxation, if such opportunities present themselves and that no energies will be expended in efforts at communication except for an occasional post card, if possible. It goes without saying that I shall be happy if warmest greetings are extended in my behalf to a mutual friend with whom contact will be a happy and prolonged part of the ensuing season.

Today began at 4:45 when I undertook a flock of "must" stuff in the hana garden to get ahead of the sun. Before 8, I found myself all a-drip from exertions in high humidity and I immediately splashed through a bath and some fresh rat raiment. Doreath's boy brought his prospective bride before 8 and I had to give them ..... a hand about what to do and where to go to obtain



11795

11795

pre-wedding legal papers. Celeste 'phoned in the midst of things, asking me if J. H., today in New Orleans, had told me Cousin Arthur wanted some people to enjoy a tour this afternoon. He had not. Celeste, on her own hook, wanted some Reverend Fathers to have a tour and asked if 10 this morning would suit. It would not. S. Willard was scheduled for 10. We worked the Fathers in at 9 but they were 40 minutes late and so that got a hurried go-round. But I need not have hurried since I. S. Willard was an hour and a half late, bringing presence just at dinner time which is always a help when a lady hasn't time to dine but must confer before pushing on to the Crescent City. She is among the kinder souls I have ever known but is unwittingly killing in her disregard for calendars governing other people's activities.

I know not how the afternoon, an exceedingly busy one ran its course but a lot of stuff was accomplished until Dan, wife and three daughters arrived for supper. The children and the boxer from across the fence had a wonderful time chasing guineas and peacocks across the vegetable parteeers at Ghana and came through with impressive assortments of feathers grabbed from the terrified birds.

inally they all departed for town and I returned to put some finishing touches on Ghana efforts. Two of the peacocks, catching sight of me, came over to assist and indicate they were hungry and so, at first dark, I headed this way, they following close behind me and so had a peaceful go at supper.

I jumped into a bath without bothering to turn on a light and thought I would stretch out on my downy couch in hopes of hearing some news, it being about 8. A tap at the door, however, impelled me to grab some covering and, Lo! James had come to call on me. He only remained an hour or so, however and as his visit had rested me, I was able to get busy on this machine to attend to some things for tomorrow's post, and, the only thing of importance, to enjoy this little chat.

So turns the local world and so I send my au revoir with a wish in every heart-beat the summer may be just grand.....

11796

Thursday, May 24th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and dry.

It was delightful to find a letter from Lyme in today's post.

The last minute swirl is, indeed, under way and I hold the thought that at least one of the assistants will be able to keep some sort of order during the ensuing two months so that the return may not be fraught with too many snarls to be untangled.

I found it interesting that the wrapper on the May 10th issue of The Enterprise got through to little Miss Lee's true hand even though the paper itself did not. I have made a mental note to put this May 10th issue aside to start off the collection that will be gathered together and held for shipment later in the summer. I don't recall the subject of the Cane River Memo for that date but I am sure it wasn't much.

I am so glad you got a glimpse of the issue of Life containing the portrait of Saint Martin and the pictorial record of doings on May 6th in the Vatican when the canonization ceremonies were finally carried through.

During the coffee hour, mine hostess handed me a clipping of what date I know not and from which paper I couldn't say,-- perhaps the clipping itself reveals these particulars, for I haven't had it read to me as yet since my informant gave me the information covered by the article verbally. It is an account of Samuel Hopkins' Lambdin's death at 36 in Natchez. I should have said S. H. L. junior. This is Mary Lambdin's elder son and of course I knew both boys quite well when I used to visit at their home. As has happened in many of these cases, the clipping was not a clipping but a photograph of the clipping.



11797

so often in families with two children, the strong one died early and the less vigorous one lived on and on. S. H. L. junior, whom everyone called "Little Jeff" was called Jeff because his Papa was thus called and so Junior was given the same nickname with a "Little" prefix to designate him from his papa. He was all full of health and activities in contrast to his younger brother, Waldo, forever ailing and frequently under doctor's observation for it appeared at one time that he might lose his sight. The last I heard of the two boys perhaps 2 or 3 years ago, Little Jeff was going strong and Waldo had picked up considerably.

I shall knock off a note to Mary and Big Jeff tonight.

There was a letter from some lady in Howard Wolf's New York office. She had recently asked me to secure a small Hunter for her which I did. In making acknowledgement, she remarked that after acquiring the little picture, she chanced to meet Bill and June Carson and was delighted to learn that in them she and I had mutual friends and mutual primitive enthusiasms.

In spite of the heat, the three or four dozen tomatoes I transplanted yesterday seem to have survived and after a thorough watering tonight, they look pert enough. I also set out another half dozen candleabra plants late this afternoon. The first half dozen set out some weeks back appear to be flourishing and if a today's bath fare as well, they ought to add a pretty touch of color by September when the plants usually attain a height of five or six feet and support candle-shaped flowers in profusion. I have most of them planted in front of Ghana, interspersing a row of cotton perhaps 3 or 4 feet on the vegetable side of the bamboo fence running in front of the little old cabin.

I guess there are half a dozen letters from people asking for appointments during June and I must get busy answering them before folding up my beard.....

11798

Friday, May 25th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and dry with quite a strong breeze to make the heat less so, the dry more so.

Today's post included a letter from Robina, penned yesterday, and saying she thought the Cane River Memo of yesterday about "God's Natives and Miss Dormon" just grand for the purpose I had in mind, which was to had Miss Dormon a bouquet and at the same time provide her with copy, if she wanted same, to circularize the news about her post card among the people who have purchased her books on the subject of wild flowers of the South. Robina said that Caroline's niece had seen the column and was forwarding it to Briarwood and at the same time writing the enterprise to see about having the column reproduced. I am glad that both Robina and Caroline McClanahan liked the piece. As for Miss Dormon, she will probably never mention it to me although, as in other columns when I have mentioned her or her Briarwood, she has expressed her satisfaction to others such as Blythe which is the usual way of Carrie's reaction to anything pertaining to herself. I may have mentioned a while back that Kay sent her a hundred bucks which Carrie did not refer to the next time she wrote Kay. Aunt Willie, I guess it was, or possibly Kay, when talking to Briarwood from the Fluff, asked if Carrie had indeed received the check, to which Carrie responded:

"Oh.....that.....of course."

In short, as you may have heard before, Miss Dormon is what might be called a sight.



11799

James came to see me just before dinner and remained to break bread. And as I wrote that line, the 'phone rang, --Long Distance calling James Register. I said I did not know where he could be located. I assume it was Kay calling. There had been talk about her coming home either Sunday or Monday and I assume James may be in town studying about reaching Kay by 'phone.

Last week James ordered an ice box from Sears, Roebuck of Dallas, through their Natchitoches office. Careful instructions were given that the box should be delivered to the J. H. Henry store at Melrose by Texas and Pacific Motor Service which has been serving local deliveries for the past quarter of a century. James wanted the box for the camp. Today a card came to Melrose for James, sent by the T. and P. Railroad office in town, advising him they were holding an ice box for him there. He got in touch with Sears. Sears got in touch with T. and P. Sears called back to explain that the T. and P. Motor Service had tried unsuccessfully to deliver the box according to instructions. The Motor Service, however, had been unsuccessful because, although the driver had hunted up and down the road for the place, he never could discover Melrose, let alone the J. H. Henry store, and so had carried it on to Natchitoches. Natchitoches T. and P. would have it sent to Melrose for thirteen dollars or would hold it until next week when another attempt would be made to locate Melrose. It all sounded pretty thin and I assume the driver probably forgot he had merchandise for this bend of the river until he had reached town from Alexandria and so had cooked up his inability to find the place as an excuse for not having gone back and delivered it.

The rabbits dug out from their ample pen last night and tonight are probably sampling fresh vegetable in the Ghana garden which just goes to show something or other, about which, I, for one, cannot worry.....

11890

10811

Memorandum:

Continued hot and dry.

I especially liked yesterday because I wasn't encumbered with people, enabling me to get a lot of outside stuff done, with an evening at the camp that was peaceful, restful and an excellent supper followed by a reading from this week's Life, --the article, a third in a series, devoted to the Adams papers. I liked the illustrations accompanying the article, too.

Among the many things I learned from the article was the fact that John Adams disliked Alexander Hamilton but thoroughly. Perhaps I had heard of this before but I don't remember anything of the sort. Inasmuch as Adams, Hamilton and Washington might be said to be the three most notable leaders of their political party of their day, and since I had always supposed all three of them had pretty much the same views on political matters, I find myself surprised to learn that Adams apparently loathed Hamilton. In the same breath, however, I must admit that I don't see why there shouldn't have been dislike among the three since three out-standing leaders of any political party at any given time might well be found to be lacking in enthusiasm, the one for the other.

I was glad to learn of Major Snowden's home in the Baltimore where Mrs. Adams spent a night when en route by coach to Washington to become first mistress of the White House. I never heard of this Major Snowden and have a feeling I shall encounter him sometime in the future and shall be the happier for this introduction.

There is always delight in recalling that Adams and Jefferson obviously enjoyed their correspondence over the dozen years or so until both their lives came to an end on July 4th, 1825. Their personalities were so different but their friendship for each other and the first rate qualities of the minds of each was bound to have given them no end of delight in speculating together on the roles each had played over such long and distinguished careers.



00811

11801

I be-stirred myself early this morning, what with dawning on the Sabbath is likely to be the one hour of the week when there will be less interruptions. And, being abroad before 5, I was able to give some attention to little Miss Murgatroyd and her fine dozen offspring, all of whom I removed from atop the old armoire on the front gallery and established in what I thought was a fine place on the gallery pavement where the little ones could frolic about and yet always be within easy running distance to a sheltered hideaway in case any marauder appeared unexpectedly from out of the weeds or where ever the old armadillo may spend his daylight hours. But I had not consulted Mrs. Murgatroyd on the finer points of the new habitation and accordingly, as soon as the offspring had breakfasted and fiddled around in a saucer of water, she piloted them all away,--slap out into the weeds where they apparently remained the balance of the day and had not put in an appearance at 5 o'clock when James dropped in to pick me up and whisk me away to the camp for supper.

Kay called me Saturday afternoon, saying she would fly back to Shreveport from Greenville or some such place in South Carolina, on Monday, reaching Shreveport by 3:30. She said she was feeling pretty good. I gather Aunt Willie has had most of the attention at the sanitorium and that Kay probably got a measure of diet samplings. This is probably as it should be for it seems to be fairly widely felt that her need for a special diet springs more from her imagination than her physical condition. It would seem, therefore, that if she got less attention than her companion, it might be just as well.

From the garden, we had vegetables of various sorts, radishes, lettuce, beans, beets, onion and so on. As invariably happens when the beets appear on the table, somebody exclaims:

"Ah, red beets for little Miss Alberta".

Little Miss A. never referred to beets but always to red beets and the adjective remains and somehow the beets, already tender and sweet enough, seem the more so, being thus hitched in memory to little Miss A. ....

11802

00811

Monday, May 28th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and dry.

The white garden is aglow with fireflies tonight and the stars unusually brilliant. I am always astonished and delighted when, as frequently happens, the nights down this way, are so light that the whole night through suggests that peculiar spread of twilight so characteristic of three quarters of an hour before dawn. I think the darkest nights under cloudless skies, have been off the Grand Banks when the ocean and the sky have seemed as one in inkiness while the stars have glittered big and wonderful. The silvery nights we have down this way, on the contrary, especially at this season of the year, seem to be gray or powder blue and one notes objects on the landscape as readily as though there were a moon to underline objects.

It hasn't cooled off any tonight and I have accordingly lingered longer on the favorite Ghana bench. The radio says a cool front is moving from New Mexico into Texas, triggering a dab of rain along its course so perhaps we shall have some cooler times on the morrow and a dab of rain which I should like even though the players may not. I believe it hasn't rained since the first of the month and four weeks at this time of year is long enough to do without a sprinkle.

My morning was pretty well taken up with Claudia. --Mrs. J. H. Williams, her daughter, Claudia, the latter's 3 years old son, -- did I say Claudia Williams, Junior, and a Mrs. Lester from Jackson, Miss. Celeste and J. H. entertained them at the Town House last night and there will be more festivities in town so long as the Lesters remain which will probably be a day or two more. The last time I remembered seeing Claudia, Jr., was her likeness, rather than herself, when she appeared in the Collier's article about geese by James Aswell, five or six years ago. For some



11803

strange reason which neither she nor I could figure out, Claudia, Jr., had never been to Melrose before, except to drop in at Celeste's. She was astonished at what she had never dreamed existed before, and immediately asked if she might bring her husband for a go-round. They live in Quincey, Illinois, where ever that may be.

News from Be ufort is on the down side. Vernon while sitting in an armchair the other day, reached for something on a little table beside the chair, and the exertion, although slight, was enough to break another vertebrae. Beth, who has been unusually charming to people at social gatherings of late, has been raising Hell at home, complaining to Vernon she has had nothing but trouble from the day she married him, etc., etc., which certainly does Vernon no good. Poor Vernon, and in what truth he could take Beth's words out of her mouth and state them in truth as to what he has experienced since the day he married her. Vernon was taken to Schumpert Hospital in an ambulance yesterday. It is said his suffering is intense. If the family could only get Beth to stay at home instead of the hospital with the patient, the latter might at least be freed for a little while from the perpetual hubbub she keeps stirring.

There was a granduation doings in Cloutierville last Thursday night and Harold McSween, or however he spells his name, who is the representative from this District, having filled the place to which Earl Long was elected. As Representative McSween was making the speech by invitation, it seems shocking that the audience should have booed him and nobody shook hands with him following the festivities. That's like Cloutierville,--hill-billies of the first water. It seems the farmers are furious because McSween, according to Time, sold out to Kennedy in a matter of a Committee vote that the President's opponents thought they had bottled up and killed in the Committee. It's a tempest in a teapot but probably will cost McSween his seat when election rolls around in July.

And now for a bit of correspondence and thence

11804

Tues ay, May 29th, 1962.

Memorandum:

This morning at 9, a wave of cool air blew in out of the west and between then and noon we had a little drizzle. It amounted to one tenth of an inch but it seemed like torrents, what with a month having elapsed since last we were thus blessed.

All day my thoughts have centered around Lyme, wondering how the day was progressing, --one bound to have been fraught with no end of pressures from every side. My thoughts will be centering on the same neighborhood on the morrow and after that I shall be the happier when the first card comes to hand indicating how things turned all around.

According to custom last night, I tuned in on the Bible slappers until news time and was mildly taken aback when a Tulsa preacher of political persuasion began taking the hide off -- of all people, -- Harold Martin. From what was said, I take it that Harold wrote an article for the Saturday Evening Post which probably appeared in an April issue. I shall inquire if anybody here saved one during the last month. In any event, the Bible slapper was complaining bitterly about the article but rejoicing that every time the Post, Time, Life, Look and so on have anything unpleasant to say about the speaker, he gets more mail from those of his listeners who, unlike me, seem moved to write him expressing their undying belief in him.

I must get a note off to Harold, congratulating him on having put a bee in the bonnet of the Tulsa rogue who, under the guise of religion, is forever denouncing everybody except the fascist group such as H. L. Hunt, the late Senator from Wisconsin and so on.

From 'phone and in-coming mail, it would



10811

11805

appear several Cane River readers or, more precisely, Cane River Memo readers liked last Thursday's piece about little Miss Dormon. Some who called especially mentioned being glad to know about the availability of post cards carrying Dormon wildflower pictures and both 'phone calls and letters expressed approval of the bouquet they felt I had presented Miss Dormon.

The 'phone went out of wack this afternoon and service wasn't restored until 8:45 tonight when enough came through to make up for lost time. Among others calling was Kay who reported her trip back to Louisiana altogether comfortable and said she had the greatest admiration for the hospital where she took the diet tests and so on. I believe she said the institution is operated by Seventh Day Adventists or whatever that particular sect calls itself. She said everyone was so kind and so kind that she looks forward to returning for another session in September. She says there are lots of young people associated with the institution which provides education with part time work to high school and college aspirants, the age of 14 being the one in which those who care to get their schooling under such auspices, begin, if they care to. I had never heard of this medical effort on the part of the Adventists and was much impressed by Kay's opinion of the business.

She reported that James is coming down this way on the morrow. I noticed his ice box on the store gallery must have been delivered by T. and P. truck today. I am so glad the truck driver was luckier in discovering the location of Melrose on this go-round. Smile, Kay. I says she will not be down on the morrow but will come on Thursday which is natal day for James and we are all supposed to break bread together.....

11806

Wednesday, May 30th, 1962.

Memorandum: Warm, cloudy and humid with a brisk half inch rain descending about 8 o'clock tonight.

I need scarcely relate where my thoughts have been all day, whence they have trauced and for whom a new taper burned all day in the little chapel. The hour is late and long since the major leg of the journey has been achieved and I hold the thought that a measure of rest and relaxation may stretch straight ahead.

It was too damp this morning for any work to be undertaken in the hay fields and accordingly I was able to have the benefit of Fugabou's assistance in the Ghana garden where lots of things had to be done to put the place in order and preparations made for transplanting of things when the full heat of day had passed. It had poured down rain in town all afternoon, it is said, but down this way the sun continued with unusual strength until about 4 when 8 or 9 borders of sweet basil could be set out, followed by a thorough watering.

This afternoon Celeste had called to say Thelma Young, Mrs. Crawford Young, had called from Kampti to say she had some Indianapolis whom she would like to bring down for a tour at 6. I must say people can think of the strangest times to unload people on one. And so they came in force between 6 and 6:30 and I gave them a round and the lowering clouds made it almost dark before I was through with them. The whole usiness was singing those proverbial psalms to the proverbial dead mule because all the men wanted



30811

11897

to talk about was today's Memorial Day races at  
Indapolis, how many cars got wrecked and so on,  
and one young couple in the pilgrimage group  
must have just been wedded or were poised on  
leaping into the sea of matrimony since they had time only  
for clinging to each other as though some  
threatening power were about to snatch them from each  
other's grasp forever. I like evidence of such  
affection but long since have found such manifestations  
a tour a mighty poor place for such manifestations  
since nothing anyone can present to them can excite their  
interest outside of themselves and I  
am bored going through the motions of being  
civilized in the face of such extra-human dis-  
plays of infatuation with nothing at all except the boy and  
girl element as each cannot restrain himself from clutching  
at the other.

Fortunately nothing of this sort last forever and I  
was delighted to hand them across the fence and scamper  
back home before the rain began coming down.

As today was a legal holiday, there was  
of course no mail. The banks  
in town were closed, I am told, but not all  
the Federal offices which seems odd indeed. I  
should have supposed such an organization as Red Cross,  
in view of its close affiliation with the  
Government, would have been closed, too, but it wasn't  
and as so often in the past, I found myself today wondering how  
holiday operate and don't operate in the Pelican State.  
It seems to me the Louisiana or Confederate Memorial Day  
comes off in about a week hence, perhaps June 6th or 10th  
or some such and then, I hope, everything that  
could have observed today will take heed of  
the holiday when it appears.

And now to fold, holding the thought the while that  
little Miss Lee's rest tonight is safe and sound.....

11808

30811

Thursday, May 31st, 1962.

Memorandum;

Cloudy and humid with half an inch of rain  
during the afternoon.

James appeared at 3 to whisk me to the camp where  
Kay was waiting. I thought she looked fine and  
was impressed that apparently only when she remembers it does  
she use her crutches. We sat on the gallery over-  
looking the river. The surface of the water was entrancing  
with the wide range of colorings, mostly in blues and grays,  
induced by impressive cloud formations swirling  
over the Montrose hills. Lightning cutting through the clouds  
could scarcely be seen but they stood out so  
strangely vibrant as the reflection cut across the  
surface of the water. It rained half an inch or so within half  
an hour and it was all very pleasant. We  
had some champagne at 4 and supped at six or  
rather at 5 and departed at 6, when they  
brought me home and they sped on, --probably to Hatchitoches.  
Naturally I didn't ask about the mild rush but assumed  
that perhaps I. S. Willard might have been entertaining for them  
at the Country Club or some such. My agents  
will set me straight on that point on the morrow  
and in the mean time, I am thankful that  
for the millionth time I didn't have to think up some  
excuse to avoid pulling up and down the road. Our  
birthday supper was bountiful, complete with home made cake with  
lighted candles. One thing is certain, neither James nor I needed  
anything more to fill in our rounding contours and  
if there was another supper in the offing, I hope it  
didn't come off until much later, following possibly some festivities  
of other in town for earlier in the evening.

Today's post embraced quite a few pieces, none of which I  
have opened as yet, what with the secretaries having departed before  
I reached Yucca. I imagine perhaps  
the rain had knocked them out of the cotton patch  
and probably, on discovering I wasn't at home at 5 when the  
shower descended, they probably went on their way, so that



11809

11809

a surprise envelope from Lyme, along with  
the other things, awaits the morrow, having already been tucked  
away in the armoire.

The blue jay in the person of Carmen  
called me this evening and had lots to  
gossip about. She related,  
among other things, that Baton Rouge felt  
the Essae Mae dinner tomorrow night might not be as heavily  
attended as previously anticipated but I shall have full  
particulars about that on Saturday when Celeste and J. H. who  
drive down tomorrow for the doings, return. According to  
Carmen who got it from Frances Rue Henry Perkle,  
who is on the library staff, those planning  
the dinner have been surprised that lots of people who  
had received invitations, had declined. According to that source,  
Essae Mae has been disagreeable to so many of her  
former associates and friends during recent years,  
the dinner failed to elicit much  
enthusiasm. All that could be gossip without  
foundation but I shall be getting full particulars this weekend.

The artist came to see me today, hoping to  
find some sweet basil plants for her little  
garden which she, indeed, did find and a pair of baby  
banties which she, indeed, did also find, not to mention  
a second pair, proving that if one pair be good, two  
pair might be considered twice as good and so roundeth out James' birthday.....

11811

11810

Friday, May or perhaps June 1st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Sunny all morning, cloudy all evening with one  
or two sprinkles but none of the tornado stuff the  
Weather Bureau had envisioned this noon as threatening  
to bring hail stones the size of baseballs as between  
this afternoon and tonight at 9. There was  
lots of static between 6 and 7 this evening but I  
didn't notice any big winds and I saw no hail  
of baseball proportion.

J. H. and Celeste with a driver set out for  
Baton Rouge and the Culver dinner early enough this morning,  
around 9 o'clock. As the dinner doesn't begin until  
7:30 or 8 o'clock and as they will not therefore  
start for home before 9 or 10, I reckon it  
will be well after midnight after they get here or when they  
do pull in. I turned their lights on around 10 which  
was certainly well in advance of their arrival.

I had some nice pilgrims by appointment  
this morning, the appointment made by Thelma Kyser,  
the pilgrims being Dr. and Mrs. Wrinkle, --what  
a odd name, --who, I assume, are Americans. They have obviously  
been all over the world and at present they are doing something  
in the capitol of Turkey, --Angora, or whatever, --it  
having been so long since I have seen the name of the  
place in print.

I liked the Wrinkles and they apparently  
liked their little tour which made things nice all around.  
On catching sight of the little frame likeness of the  
Madama and Child in Ghana, Mrs. Wrinkle threw up her  
hands in delight, recalling to her husband that they  
had seen the original in the Cathedral at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.  
How some people do get about.

Because of last evening's rain, there wasn't any haying  
today and so I got Fugabou who did a lot of things



11811

11811

Friday, June 3rd, 1962.

in every department except the one, --weeding, --which I had hoped would witness the most progress which it most certainly didn't. But I was happy to get the brick pavement of the Yucca Gallery put back in order once more, the armadillo marduders having again put that in a condition suggesting nothing so much as the aftermath of an earthquake. The tunnels those animals burrow are at least a foot or a foot and a half deep and a foot in width which certainly requires plenty of loads of gravel to get them filled in again.

Another little black bantie brought forth flock of biddies this afternoon and I was happy to give the mama and the little ones to Fugabou to take home to his grandson. And as I write the word, grandson, it seems so odd in connection with Fugabou who looks, as James remarked the other day, to be a boy of about 17 or 18, what with his lack of height, his thinness of figure and his readiness to find things amusing, no matter what.

I am not sure I shall be capable of giving away banties as fast as their mamas can sit up new bathes but I am most certainly going to try mighty hard, and I still have plenty of plantation friends who are anxious to receive some from this location which at the moment appears so opulent in producing same.

I. S. Willard called this noon with lots to talk about but nothing in particular to say. I didn't hear directly from the Registers but various agents reported seeing James at the Post Office, --Carmen,-- at the community center, --Ursula Walker, --and so on so I take it they survived yesterday's afternoon natal day party.....

11812

11811

Sunday, June 3rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid with a dab of rain Saturday morning at 7, followed by all blue sky through the balance of the day and into Sunday until 3 p.m. when the rains started again and still going at 9:30 p.m.

The cook didn't appear to give supper Saturday night. At noon she had told me what a busy afternoon she had ahead of her, what with having to go to town to get her new dress to wear at her son's wedding Sunday afternoon in Bunkie. She planned to have her perruke rigged up Saturday night and to attend to all the hundred and one things that must be undertaken before traveling 75 miles to attend a son's wedding. Later I learned that when she came out of her house to start for town, she was surprised to see her son drive up. He said he had just realized he had to be at work in Houston on Monday morning and therefore he and his prospective bride had decided it would be better to be married on Saturday afternoon instead of Sunday afternoon and therefore he had come to pick up his mama and whisk her away to the ceremony. She said she felt out done, what with her dress in town, her perruke unriggered up and all but she stepped into the car beside her son and sailed off for the wedding, some 25 miles or so below Alexandria. Soads of friends and kinsfolk of the groom had planned to drive from here to Bunkie on Sunday but they all changed their plans I reckon when on Saturday evening they discovered that the Sunday wedding had already been achieved.



11811

11813

James came this afternoon just as it was beginning to rain. He said he had left Kay in town and had some workmen at the camp digging ditches and doing some plumbing and asked if I didn't want to join him on the gallery there. I did. He read me some mail and some articles from magazines and the ensuing two hours passed speedily. He said he assumed I had thought it odd they had quitted the camp so abruptly on Thursday. He said he had given the storm as the excuse for getting back to town whereas in reality, he didn't have his glasses and that Kay would have been much upset had he tried to drive after sundown without them. It seems that Aunt Willie plans to attend dedication festivities in Morgan City the latter part of June or July, I forget which, and will be met in New Orleans by Kay and by I. S. Willard who will drive Kay thence, after which all the ladies will return to Natchitoches for a day or two. It all sounds a little wacky but if it suits the plans of those concerned, that is all that matters.

Natalie, just back from a Southern Writers Conference, held this weekend in Lafayette, just called. She reports having been among the 300 odd people submitting manuscripts, she having submitted three, and to everybody's delight, she received second and third prizes which I think quite remarkable. She said somebody at college handled press releases on the conference and would no doubt supply the local press but consented at my request to call Mrs. Walker to give particulars as she viewed them. I immediately called Mrs. Walker to expect a call, explaining I thought she would agree with me that it might be just as well to stress literary gifts as a pleasant novelty in a community where winning prizes at the card table seems to be so much the order of the day.

A sweet note from Briarwood approving the Cane River Memo devoted to her. I shall try to find and attach.....

11814

Monday, June 4th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy most of the day but without rain. The five day forecast by the Weather Bureau is for showers.

I guess the plantation didn't work much what with yesterday's rain and today's bottle. Fug bou was sent to me at noon but at first contact I could tell nothing much ~~sh~~ could be accomplished. I designated two parterres that needed attention, half hoping he would get lost before he attacked them--and he did.

In mid afternoon I had some people from Jackson, Miss. At Ghana I noticed one lady couldn't keep her eyes from wandering toward the cistern. Finally I asked her if she was especially intrigued by something there. She said she was. She pointed out a pair of feet protruding from one side of the cistern, the balance of the body being concealed by the upper prt of the thing and I realized Fug bou had flattened out and gone to sleep on the bench running around four sides of the cistern. Verily Monday is a difficult day on the plantation.

Sister blew in about 11, enroute to Baton Rouge. She told the cook she had to eat rightaway and thus be able to get going on down the road. She dashed out to find me at the Ghana garden, saying she wanted to take some string beans to Blythe. She said Blythe has just had all her teeth out. As she had had those on the lower jaw removed years ago, I reckon that "all" might mean the balance on the upper jaw. In view of the teller of the news, I realize there may be not a shred of truth in the statement.

On returning to the big house, she ate her dinner, gulped it down, and then hustled her plate away and when J. H. arrived



11811

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ten minutes later with the clerk, she started in all over again, soups, stake, etc., etc., and so stored away two meals at a single sitting. She volunteered the news that John Wenk will be coming to visit here on June 3rd but what with today being the 4th and no John in sight, I concluded she was simply rattling along as usual, improvising whatever topic she felt inclined to bring up.

Her daughter leaves for Mexico City on the 6th, she said, after which she threatens to honor us with a prolonged visit. May it not please God.

The grandiflora magnolias are currently at their best, reminding me of one or another, especially little Miss Lee and little Miss Alberta, of happinesses known in other summers when magnolias somehow gave themselves a special value that would always remain with me. The crepe myrtles are just beginning to unfold their luxuriant colors and a watermelon red and a pink one at Ghana are unusually lovely at the moment. In the circle where the paths converge in the Ghana garden, a row of pale green lettuce the size of dinner plates provides an outer ring and harmonizes so nicely with the pale green of the corcomb and gives special emphasis to the zinnias currently dominating that area. I was pulling grass there at dusk this evening and was enchanted every now and then as the aroma of young sweet basil, plucked inadvertently, would fuse with the other pungent aroma arising from the damp earth. I guess the nicest days of Spring are those that give the impression that summer is already here.....

11816

11811

Tuesday, <sup>June</sup> May 5th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid but none of the rain predicted.

Carmen called to read me a letter from Edith Porter, penned in Paris where, as everywhere along her far flung European jaunt, Edith seems to be finding everything wonderful. May another traveler this season be equally blessed. Carmen thought Edith was sailing for home today or was arriving in New York. --Carmen couldn't remember which. Edith plans to go to Connecticut for a vacation on her return so I reckon we shall not be seeing her for a while anyway.

I had never given the matter much thought but I assume that one incontestable advantage of boat rather than plane travel is the opportunity the boat gives the traveler for catching his breath, no matter which way the tripper is going, whether heading out or coming back since in the case of little Miss Lee, at least, a bit of breath-catching would stand her in good stead both ways.

There was a card penned in Paris from Edith today and I gather she may not have received the couple of letters I wrote her during her absence, although they were posted well in advance of her arrival dates in Salzburg and in Florence. Possibly she simply didn't take time to write which I trust may be the case for I am one who believes a traveler should conserve strength for traveling and not expend it on correspondence. Verily post cards are wonderful inventions and I think we might just as well get out a commemorative stamp honoring the gent who thought up the first one.



11817

It would appear Fug, bou slept off his  
drunk of yesterday for when he turned up this morning, around  
9, after doing some plantation  
work, he said, he accomplished quite a lot in the  
Ghana weeds before vanishing at noon, --into the  
hayfield, I suppose.

The recent rains have produced wonderful growths of  
grass all around and some of the cotton fields  
are quite lovely to look upon,  
what with solid carpets of grass-green, with herringbone stripes  
of the lighter cotton green stretching to infinity.

Hoe hands are swinging hoes at a great rate  
and flame throwers are equally busy. The latter  
are operated from a tractor with the flames passing across the  
grass between the rows of cotton and turning  
the grass brown. I suppose it would turn  
anything it struck brown, too, but the  
outfit is rigged up so it doesn't touch the  
cotton. It is said a second pass at  
the grass is made within a few days following the first going-  
over and after that the grass is dead. The hoe hands may then  
concentrate exclusively on the weeds in the cotton  
rows. I am not sure if the flame-  
throwing treatment is all that it is  
cracked up to be. As I recall, the flame thrower  
was employed in 1948 but it must have  
left something to be desired since,  
so far as I know, it was put aside for 14 years which certainly doesn't  
sound as though it could have been too hot.

In today's post came the current issue  
of Forest and People, some kind of a  
magazine which I believe the Lost Word publishes  
for some forestry society. My attention was  
called to an illustration, old as the hills, of the artist  
and me sitting at this desk. There is an article  
on Southern cooking by none of them. At least  
so the title and by-line reads and I am  
willing to accept that as the truth but it must have  
been as long ago as I cannot remember having done the thing.  
One would scarcely expect the Lost Word to  
communicate about the matter had Lo!  
she didn't.....

11818

Wednesday, June 6th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid.

My health must be bubbling or at least  
the sweat glands must be functioning over time, what  
with four shirts being thoroughly drenched during  
the day in which I really didn't labor very much in  
spite of the impressive picture I must have  
presented of a cat just fished out of a mill pond  
or some such.

Be that as it may, when the hour approached 7 in  
the evening, I had in mind to divest myself of all  
raiment excusing a pair of pants, after which  
I seated myself by the radio to get caught up  
with what had been going on in the world and to  
cool off a dab. The peacocks are forever  
making a racket on the front gallery at that magical  
hour and so I paid scant heed to unfamiliar sounds until  
it dawned on me they might be human and I investigated and  
discovered Dan's wife, June, there with  
two of her three girls. I retreated, donned  
some additional raiment and went out to  
learn she had picked up a couple of pictures  
at the artist's and had discovered they were  
damp and accordingly, instead of taking them  
home, had left them on a table on the back  
gallery of the big house. I thought it  
best on a couple of accounts to go over right away and  
see about them. The two little girls and their  
mama were in short pants. Their mama explained  
that she simply couldn't prevent the children  
from sitting on the paintings en route back home and therefore  
she had decided to leave the pictures here until  
they were dry. She wanted to see the drapes  
in the library because, as she explained,  
the same draper is doing similar ones for her new home  
in Pecane Park. From there I ushered the mama and  
two offspring to their car and by then, of course, the  
evening news casts were over.



11811

11819

The day's post brought a card from Ireland or whatever that divided country is now styled. It bore a picture of Johnstown Castle, described as 14th century but presenting all the appearance of architecture of some four hundred odd years later. The message ran something like this:

"Just to think I have been here a whole month and have only one more month to remain.  
Ann C.

For some stupid reason I could only imagine a single word, -- Ainst, -- did not Ann C. I assume Ann C may possibly be Ann Cordell of Eldorado, Arkansas although I didn't know until the card arrived that she was anywhere but in Eldorado. I declare how people do get about.

I was pleased with my day's labor although I haven't much to indicate great cause for rejoicing. I did get another garden planted, however, -- mostly mustard greens, beets and so on. I laughed to myself while planting, recalling how a month ago a couple of people, passing for being planter and planter's assistant, took me look at the vast array of mustard and beets in the Ghana and nearly swooned while declaring there were enough planted to feed the Parish for a season. But fresh vegetables seem to have been popular enough at both the big house and across the fence so that the initial planting production is already beginning to diminish and today's sowing will be bringing forth fresh supplies just about the time the others run out.

James dropped in at 4:30 for a half hour chat. He and his wife are said to be doing fine. I made the most of his impending trip to town by asking him to deliver a bundle of fagots to the Walkers, -- bamboo stakes for their tomato plants, in pursuance of an inquiry on the Walker side as to what was best for staking tomato plants, and in line with a Cane River Memo of dull content on the same subject. So runeth the day and now I'm going to try again to get some news.....

11820

11811

Thursday, June 7th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid. We got three drops of rain at noon, followed by sunshine and thus escaped the soaker received in town and a parade of thunder showers that deluged Shreveport.

I was enchanted with a post card in today's post from little Miss Lee. I had understood air travel was fast but I didn't know the speed for a crossing was as great, -- anywhere near as swift, as was indicated on the card. I can well imagine how good it was to hear the voice of an old friend by telephone, and I am holding the thought the two friends may be together ere long.

A clipping came to hand today covering the Essie Mae coronation of Friday last past. You will recognize a familiar face or two. So far as the article itself is concerned, I don't reckon it contains anything of unusual interest and I did not get around to read it but, of course, do not want it back.

James came to see me this afternoon. He seemed to be feeling as fine as usual and was enchanted to relate and "Almost Goodbye" experience at his house last night. In the afternoon I. S. Willard called while he was at the camp but was still there when he reached home. Shortly after he had joined the ladies in a chat, he suggested I. S. Willard join them in dinner at home. She had to decline because she was rushed about getting something or other at home attended to. She then arose in a gesture of departing but did have one or two more things to say and Time marched on. This was followed by her host occasionally standing up, sitting down,



05811

11821

standing up, sitting down and so on. Eventually, however, the door was reached, then the gallery and, miracle of miracles, finally the car. But that, of course, wasn't really the end since, as invariably happens, the lady simply couldn't find her keys, etc., etc., and yet, unbelievable as it seems, after three hours of Almost Goodbye, the deal was indeed effected and that was that.

What impressed Mames even more, however, was the response Kay got when she chanced to mention sometime during the prolonged sitting that Sister had honored them with a visit last Monday although contact had not been established. Kay had expressed doubts as to how pleasant such visitations from that quarter might be but I. S. Willard dispelled all doubts by saying what a lovely girl Sister really is and that everyone is always perfectly at ease whenever she puts in an appearance. One thing I shall never know: --does I. S. Willard really believe that statement and, if so, how did she get that way since she seems to be the only person in the world to ever voice such a thought.

On the home front the most notable event in the feathered friends' section was the decision on the part of Madam Bantam, backed up by her husband, that her little ones of recent hatching were sufficiently big enough boys and girls to now to shift for themselves. The little ones were instructed to assume the ways of grown-ups when breakfast time arrived, with mama giving them a friendly peck as a sort of Hail and Farewell and Papa backing up the gesture. From that point on, mama went her way and made it clear to the little ones they could go theirs. Papa backed her up in this move, too, and at supper time, contrary to custom since birth, the little ones were not summoned by motherly clucks and after supper, I noticed mama flew up to the top of the armoire, probably starting another round of laying. What a production machine she really turns out to be.....

11822

05811

Friday, June 8th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid with a mid morning shower that took the hoe hands out of the field for half an hour but the sun put them slap back again.

I have heard anything on the radio about the old adage about the 40 day rain we may expect because of the showers all around the country on this June 8th. In New England the folks call it St. Swithin's Day, in this section of Louisiana it is styled the day of St. Medard. I never have taken time out to probe into the careers of these two saints, or possibly this one saint for I know not if St. Swithin and St. Medard are two different characters or if they are one and the same, simply having different names in different countries and localities.

I was delighted at the time of the shower when a little black bantie I had forgotten about put in her appearance on the front gallery, trailing a dozen newly hatched biddies in her train. They, --the little ones, --were obviously not long out of their respective shells but displaying the astonishing vitality that newly arrived bantam babies always display. I am holding the thought that the old adage about rain on St. Swithin's, St. Medard's day doesn't apply to banties, too. When I contemplate the number of times during the ensuing summer Mrs. Murgatroyd and her associates will bring forth, saints or no saints, I shudder at the numbers going to make up the constant rounds to be made by the stork. But all of my friends of color seem to adore banties and I shall never have any difficulty in being able to give away all that the local mamas can produce. When I hear mention made on the air about exploding population the world around, I find myself wondering what the speaker would have to say if he ever heard of the productivity of the banties.



32811

11823

Doreatha, the cook, whose son, Lee, once secretaried for me, now lives in Houston, has a fine wife, child and car and is buying a home. He works in the Police Department garage. Doreatha said he called her last night and reported that while he was at a little store buying groceries, a car had stopped near his, although at the time, he didn't know it, and the person driving the car had got out and removed all four hub caps from Lee's car and had vanished before Lee came out of the store. As he started to get into his car, however, a lady in the neighborhood who had seen the doings, handed Lee a slip of paper on which the lady, in lieu of a pencil, had marked down the number of the hub cap thief's car license. Lee, naturally, wasn't long in turning it over to the police and the police, in turn, weren't long in tacking down the car and its owner. They found the hub caps in the car. Let us hope Lee made it a point to buy some mighty pretty lip sticks and present them to the lady,-- and a nice new shiney pencil, to boot.

I have heard more talk lately about the impending doom of Saturday Evening Post and I regret the fate that seems inevitable. I believe an attempt is going to be made to issue it bi-monthly. Perhaps there have been weeklies which have staggered from 52 to 12 issues or 24 issues a year and survived but sooner or later all I ever heard of have ended in oblivion, once the tinkering with the numbers of issues per year begins. I know nothing about the history of the Post as between its date of founding by Benjamin and the time in my youth when I was wont to read its serials in pre-publication installments, especially biographies and memoirs which I lapped up inordinately. For half a century or more, I suppose, it must have been one of the strongest weekly publications in the world. Here is always something sad about the passing of print personalities with such an outstanding record.

And now I must do a d, b of mail and fold.....

32811

11824

Sunday, June 10th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Except for a shower on Saturday evening, the entire weekend was glorious in blue sky, big puffy white clouds and dazzling sunshine by day and tender moonlight by night.

I am grateful to God for the peace and quiet obtaining and I tried to put some of it on deposit against rumpuses that will probably roll 'round during the ensuing summer.

Celeste's nephew, Joe Regard, with wife and year old son arrived Saturday morning from Baton Rouge for the weekend. Celeste had been cooking up a party for them and it came off Saturday night for about 15 couples of Joe's generation and, according to report, a grandtime was had by all.

James came over Saturday afternoon and whisked me off to the camp where he, Kay and I collapsed in deck chairs under the favorite cedar of little Miss Lee and me. It was hot and humid with clouds rolling 20 miles or so away down beyond Derry. About 5:30, a mist developed and we went inside to sup. Perhaps 3 tenths of an inch of moisture descended but it had stopped when supper was finished and we sat on the gallery observing a marvelous sunset. An opening, seeming about a foot wide in the clouds, ran for a thirty mile stretch, north and south, long the top of the Montrose hills, and the opening was brilliant, the more so because of the blackness of the hills below, and the solidity of the vast cloud just above, making the whole horizon take on the appearance of a vast stage, dazzlingly light inside but concealed from view when the rising curtain on the scene, gave the impression of having stuck just as it started to go up. The thermometer must have dropped about 30 degrees and the freshness of the air was invigorating. I believe the sun was supposed to have set at 7:20, but it remained dark from 6:30 onward and only when I returned to Yucca before 8 did



11825

11825

the clouds disappear and a lovely moon touch up the  
freshly washed gardens.

This afternoon at 4, James returned to pick me up  
again. We did not linger here as Kay was  
at the camp and I. S. Willard was scheduled to  
arrive with Miriam Carver for supper at 4:30. Kay,  
James and I again sat beneath our favorite cedar and chatted.  
An hour after it was time for I. S. Willard and companion  
to arrive, Kay remarked that she was getting  
hungry and James said we might as well eat since  
none of us really knew if I. S. Willard intended  
putting in an appearance this Sunday or next. When  
we were about half through supper, I. S. Willard  
put in an appearance. Everybody was inconvenienced  
except I. S. Willard. She was a study in  
patriotic colors, a pretty, plain, powder-  
blue frock, white-white hair and a scarlet lipstick.

After supper, James took her to observe some changes he  
had made down on the margin of the river and  
while they were away, Kay asked me to tell her frankly  
if the quiet life in a Parish such as  
Natchitoches didn't bore me. This is the first  
sign I had noticed on her part to drag me of taking up  
residence somewhere else. I guess  
they must have been here four or five months now and with nothing to  
do and the loosening of local tendrils to spend time  
in South Carolina, naturally doesn't lend itself to  
interest or contentment, I suppose. There was something  
said about inability to imagine anyone wanting  
to build a house in this part of the State and as  
I have never yet figured out the New Orleans to  
Baton Rouge move and even less the Baton Rouge to  
Natchitoches change, I haven't any hope of  
trying to comprehend what may next be on the schedule.  
James is busy and happy but I doubt if Kay  
will ever find the resources for happiness  
that abound in her husband.....

11826

Monday, June 11th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid. Cloudy this morning and  
rain this afternoon to the extent of  
half an inch, knocking the field hands out of the  
cotton field while it catapulted me  
right into the Ghana weeds which pulled with us  
vast facility, thanks to the dampening. Tonight  
is wonderfully mellow, thanks  
to the presence of a waxing moon in a  
cloudless sky and I find myself holding  
the thought a seeable moon may be where little  
Miss Lee chances to find herself.

As you may have noticed, the paragraphing  
or margins thus far are curious. I am writing  
by moonlight, as a matter of fact, what with  
something gone wrong with the electricity  
which seems to have beclouded the  
typewriter by the greater intensity of the shadows.

The Registers did not come down today but they called this evening to give  
a report of their adventures after  
leaving here for Natchitoches last night.  
I. S. Willard, it had been agreed,  
would drive just ahead of them and they  
would keep three or four car lengths behind.  
She drove at about 40 miles to the  
hour, always keeping to the extreme  
right of the road, to such an extent in fact,  
often she was more on the shoulder than on the  
black top. Somewhere along the  
way two gentlemen in a white convertible  
cut in between the Willard and Register  
vehicles. Later I. S.  
Willard explained she thought that when this  
white convertible finally got ahead of her  
it was Kay and James although they



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a black Studebaker. Be that as it may, and I. S. Willard as she is, she still thought it Kay and James just ahead of her in the white convertible when they cut in in front of her and flagged her down, after bringing themselves and her to a stop. A man, obviously drunk, got out and said a car in front of him had gone into the ditch but by then James and I had halted along side and I. S. Willard still thought the car ahead was the Register one and didn't seem to recognize James who declined to respond to the drunk, standing by I. S. Willard's car when he waved his arm and said it was alright for James to proceed. Naturally James waved him to go on back to his white convertible and that was that and the ladies were very flustered and James was very filled with wonder as to how I. S. Willard gets through the world as well as she does.

On Sunday night, when leaving the camp she had said goodbye all around, explaining she was taking off early this morning for Monroe where she had various meetings ensuing two or three days. Around 10 a.m. today, she dropped in on the Registers and the ladies especially had much to chatter about. She finally did tear herself away at 8 p.m., however, explaining she had discovered that she just had too much to do to get away to Monroe today. So turns the world of I. S. Willard.

As for Lestan's world, it rotated mostly on the vegetable garden today and tonight I shall think of it again just before folding up time for there's a nice crisp salad awaiting the magical moment, resting in the ice box and I think I am going to like it, --fresh tomato-belle pepper and onion, cluttering up a hunk of tuna, --the tuna not being from the garden and I find vast satisfaction being able from here on until November plucking ripened things from the local vines for midnight snacks.....

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12  
Tuesday, June 12th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Humid and hot and, in spite of the St. Swithin-St. Medard business about 40 days of rain following Thursday's shower, there wasn't so much as a drop across the landscape but plenty of torrents cascading from me everytime I undertook any labor in the flower and vegetable sections.

Thelma had called yesterday to ask if she might come down today. She said John is in Baton Rouge, fighting the Battle of the Budget. Naturally I said I should be enchanted, as, indeed, I was.

James put in an appearance about 11:30 this morning and remained for noon dinner with J. H., the clerk and me and that was all very pleasant. I think he especially relished the vegetables which Doreath cooks to delectably, --okra for the gumbo, mustard, beets, new Irish potatoes just out of the good earth and snap beans to round out the steak and dessert, ice tea and demi-tasse.

After dinner, James came over to Yucca for a little chat which must have frightened off the secretaries, as I had especially shaken the grapevine at dawning, and of course I didn't get the noon news which I also missed between 6 and 7 tonight as I got lost in the weeds at sunset. I shall try to catch up with the day's doing at 10.

Thelma arrived at 2, bringing a market basket full of good things for me, everything from a wonderful stew of some kind through orange wine, cheese of the blue variety, jam, toast sticks, cucumbers in sour cream, ice cream and I cannot remember what else.

She brought along Summer Dancers which



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she reviewed for me, reading excerpts from each chapter which I thought very kind of her. It certainly is light. Then she brought a short story, somebody kin to the Butlers, had written and sent to her, asking her opinion. She wanted mine. Then Helma explained that the Hysterical Ladies are holding a business session tomorrow afternoon and she wanted to go into one or two potentions on the agenda which she, as President, will introduce for the October doings. Natchitoches in general and the ladies in particular would swoon if they ever suspected how much agenda somehow gets hatched behind the bamboo curtain.

Helma wanted to stroll over to Ghana before leaving and I took along her market basket and we found lots of things to give it the appearance of a cornucopia before she got headed toward home again.

Helma said Beth wants Beaufort on this year's Pilgrimage but thinks Vernon's health will be such that he will not be able to walk for at least 10 months, making it uncertain as to how things will be rocking along in October. From Vernon's brother, one learns that Vernon's health is in a most precarious state and that it is certainly beyond the family's hope that he may be able to survive the summer. Thus reports from the same family vary but, knowing Beth as everyone does, nobody puts the slightest credit on anything she says from one moment to the next. One of the peculiarities of his physical condition, aside from Parkinson's, is the fact that the two crushed vertebrae somehow makes it impossible to give pain killers that have any effect and it is said he suffers the tortures of the damned..

And thus turneth Tuesday and now I must get busy and attend to some mail and then attend to the salad.....

11830

Wednesday, June 13th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid but none of the rain in the 40 day cycle we were supposed to receive.

It has been so long since morning, I don't seem to remember very much about the details, prosaic enough at best. There were three hours on the end of a hoe before the day really got going in other departments, people in the morning, a stack of work in the afternoon and a feeling of exhaustion at supper time, impelling me for the first time I can remember to linger at table after the others had gone and Doreatha had tidied up the place. As I left the big house, I told her I doubted if I should keep awake until I reached Yucca and that if she should find me still asleep under a nandina bush by breakfast time on the morrow, she might just as well let me sleep on.

But I did make it here and picture my surprise when I found two people awaiting me on the front gallery, --Kay and James. They said they had be-stirred themselves late this morning and gone for a ride this afternoon and thought they would drop in for a little chat.

They looked so fresh in their pretty clothes and I'm sure my sweaty, rumpled raiment must have been impressive by contrast. We chatted a while inside, sampled some cold drinks, --James and I had some of stressing tomato juice, Kay sticking strictly to water. Kay thought it would be pleasant to stroll, --she was using but a single crutch, --in the Ghana garden and stroll in the Ghana garden we did, .....



00811

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sitting for the twilight hour on a bench beneath  
a big pecan and watching the moon grow  
in brilliance. The twin black cats  
had a wonderful time scampering about from  
limb to limb in the vast mass of greenery over our  
heads.

Eventually we strolled back to the Yucca and later we went on to their car and  
they were gone and I came back, praising God  
for the solitude and ting me.

I am supposed to do a column  
tonight but there are a couple of letters I am bound to do and after that  
I know perfectly well I shall be folding up my beard and calling it a day.

Sometime between jumps during the day,  
I heard the blue bantam atop the armoir, rattling eggs around. She is the one  
who recently begot the 18 children out  
of the 20 odd eggs. I stopped operations  
long enough to hunt up a cardboard carton  
and mount a ladder, gathering up the  
six eggs I found that she had already  
deposited and placing them in the new nest so  
that when she decides to hatch another batch, the  
dgs will be more or less thin the spread of her feathers and not all over the  
top of the armoir.

Thelma called me just now. She said the matters  
we had discussed yesterday were presented to the  
Board yesterday, --the Hysterical ladies.  
Everything was accepted and plans are going ahead immediately  
to put iron gates on the American cemetery and put in  
order many of the colonial graves, some of them sadly in  
need of repair, --straightening up the  
bricks, re-setting the headstones and so on.  
The American cemetery will be on the Pilgrimage  
tour this year and the graves so marked by various insignia,  
some colonial, some ante bellum so that visitors may  
readily identify them. And so the day  
runs its course and within half an hour I trust  
I may be in dreamland.....

00811

11832

Thursday, June 14th, 1962.

Memorandum:  
Hot and humid and all clear.

I must apologize for all the complaining I did last  
night about oven enervation. After doing the  
mail, I decided I might just as well go ahead and  
knock off a column which, naturally, wasn't any good  
but it will have to do for the June 21st issue,--  
something about deep summer religion. I guess it was, but I  
was so sleepy I don't even remember what  
I was chattering about.

It was warm early this morning but in spite  
of that and considerable activity, I felt the inertia of  
the past couple of days vanish by mid morning and  
the balance of my day has been bubbling over with the  
satisfaction that comes when one can attempt  
things with gusto.

Juanita A came down to get a carload of  
giant's beard and it was as always pleasant to  
see her. She brought me a big bucket of  
cuttings from frail plants, thinking I  
would like to cultivate them. With the present heat  
and no roots on the cuttings, I doubt if I shall  
have much success with them but I shall find some semi-  
shade and dampness and try my hand with them, carrying  
small regret if they give up their several ghosts  
before they even get started.

I suggested she stay for dinner, which she did and we  
were five at table, including the clerk, J. H., Dan, etc.

I was glad we had packed the car with the plunder before dinn  
er since it was inordinately hot by the time we had dined.



58811

11833

Carmen had called in the morning to ask if she could bring some people down in mid afternoon. She could and did. One lady, a Mrs. Ellis, is in some Boston library, and seemed about twice as young as another lady, a Mrs. Jones, with life of the Episcopal preacher, but, of course, it turned out that the younger Mrs. Ellis was nevertheless the mother of the elder Mrs. Jones.

My agents reported that James was at the camp during the afternoon but he did not pass this way and frankly I was enchanted at the close of day to be able to collapse. Tomorrow is the Register wedding anniversary and I shall send them a floral greeting in town tomorrow morning. Somehow I had expected to do something about this anniversary but I didn't get around to it. Perhaps there will be some sort of a session at the camp tonight. Wednesday night Ray mentioned that I. S. Willard would be in town on Friday night but whether that meant festivities were planned with her included, I know not. I think James prefers the camp to the Country Club and I am holding the thought they don't cook up a party at the aforesaid club for I view with meager enthusiasm any thought of getting rigged up for supper in town. Of course I think the celebrants should be widening their circle of friends for just such occasions as the present, and I feel especially stung on this point for their sakes and even more so for my own wish to remain peacefully at home at the close of such busy days. Somehow it all reminds me of one of my friends who came to my house for dinner one hot summer's night in Manhattan. The weather was at once soggy and blistery and he was spending much of his time while in New York atop the Plaza where he was staying. I remember how impressed I was as I gently wilted at my own table when he expressed the thought that Manhattan was such a delightfully cool place for spending the summer. So is Cane River if one can only reserve the evenings.

The artist came to see me. I know the time is wrong, what with her two romances in progress but I gave her a gourd picture to do with a view to sending it to the tile folks against autumn. I. S. Willard is supposed to have been putting an earlier one into proper form but that began in January and may not be achieved before next year and I can't wait. Thus things turn and so must I toward my down couch.....

11834

58811

Friday, June 15th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The day all blue and gold and hot and tonight all blue and silver and mild of thermometer readings.

So often these days both in morning and afternoon, I discard soaked raiment for dry that I seem to have become dehydrated without realizing it. A dab of salt now and then and ample liquids keep me in pretty good balance although dehydration probably does tend to exhaust one somewhat.

In any event, I was glad that no calls came from town inviting me to participate in Register anniversary celebrating and I was enchanted at the prospect of jumping into the tub when I finally moseyed from the Ghana garden to Yucca along about 7. Just as I put my foot in the tub, I heard a familiar voice on the front gallery. It was James who said he and Kay were the only campers on the river, apparently, and that some peach ice cream and cake were planned for rounding out the moonlight under the cedars and would I join them. I would, --if he wanted to wait while I splashed through a quick shower and he waited.

The moonlight was wonderful and the peach ice cream equally so. Conversation was pleasant enough. They said they had spent the day at the camp but had received the potted chrysanthemums I had sent to Pecan Park before they left home. Kay said I was the only one who had remembered their anniversary. I think, unless reminded, the average person doesn't recall other people's anniversaries. If Aunt Willie remembered it, she probably did so with scant pleasure. What other individuals they expected might remember it, I would know.



11835

The evening star, --Venus, I guess, --was unusually bright in spite of the radiance of the moon. These nights it hangs over the Montrose hills and casts a four or five foot reflection on the placid waters of the river making a setting equally conducive to quiet as to chatter.

Kay opined that for the first time in her life she got the impression I seemed tired. Brother. At 10:15, after she had been up for only 12 hours, it seemed generally agreed that they should call it a day and I was perfectly willing to have them drive me this way when they headed out. I took the opportunity to lie when they outlined the possibility that S. Willard might be down this way on the morrow but saying I was expecting some friends from Denver, of all places, on Saturday afternoon. They said they could push supper up or back to accommodate my schedule but I said I would probably have to eat in town and that they had better count me out. They asked about Sunday and I said I thought that could be arranged really enough. I am looking forward with infinite pleasure tomorrow night to spending a quiet evening alone. Few people, I suppose, can possibly imagine that now and then other people really do enjoy being alone, if for no other reasons than to collapse in private and their kindness, --that is to say the kindness of Kay and James in wanting to help me to avoid the boredom of having only my own company is touching. I believe James appreciates the ability to get free of personalities once in a while but I fancy such a thing would be difficult for Kay to comprehend although she is not at all in the category of the Marie Antoinette section that craves parties and people all around the clock. Well, so much for tonight and now I am bound to fold.....

11836

Sunday, June 17th, 1962.

Memorandum;

All fair around the clock on Saturday. Hot withal and all fair Sunday until 5:30 when two and a half inches descended, followed by clearing skies within an hour or so when the full moon took over and it was enchanting.

I relished my quiet Saturday. In the morning five field hands appeared, the cotton having been thoroughly gone over. Two of the field hands, being rogues and the other three dumb sons of the soil, knowing but one plant, --cotton. They all seemed a little disappointed when, instead of turning them loose among the vegetables, I kept them strictly concentrated in other sections. The net result was that quite a lot of weeds were eradicated and not very many vegetables lifted.

I relished my Saturday evening at home and celebrated by doing nothing in particular and folding up my beard fairly early.

Today was pleasant enough. Dan Regard is spending the weekend with his Aunt Celeste, much to everyone's pleasure for Dan Regard is a swell guy. He had a Hatchitoches boy friend down for Sunday and as Celeste and J. H. were going to the camp down by the spillway for Sunday noon dinner, the three of us dined at home and it was pleasant all around, including the tour that followed..

James came over at 4 to invite me to join him and Kay at the camp for supper. We sat beneath of cedars for a pleasant hour and then moved inside when the rains came. Fairly high winds accompanied the shower and probably broke a tree limb over the electric wires, throwing the camp into twilight which was just as pleasant as the mazdas. We sat on the



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gallery after supper, watching the sunset and drinking in the lovely light patterns playing on the surface of the river below. The lights came back on eventually but as the moon was already doing buig business, nobody paid much attention to the restoration of the current. I was back home by 10 o'clock, happy at the opportunity to have a little chat with Miss Lee and undisturbed by any telephone interruptions, what with the storm seeming to have knocked out the Southern Bell more thoroughly than Valley Electric

In the horticultural department, I was amused this morning when I gave a look at some persimmons I had planted early in the Spring. They were about three feet in height and usually they don't bring forth fruit until they are 10 or 12 feet in height. One of this Spring's planting, however, and only one, surprised me and possibly itself, by putting out about a dozen bits of fruit. Naturally I removed all save one in order the plant may not be exhausted by such premature bearing but I did leave the one solitary persimmon to see for sure just which variety it is.

In the aviary section, Madam Peacock is beginning to manifest signs of returning to the social whirl. She usually spends a little more time away from her nest just before the little ones hatch and her morning strolls in the Ghana garden are a little more extended each day. I have not counted the eggs on which she has been parking but my guess is they number four. One of these days I expect to see her venturing forth in the white garden with some offspring and it will be time enough then to count the little ones and see if any eggs remain unhatched.....

36811

11838

Monday, June 18th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, hot and humid. Another 2 inch rain this afternoon to swell the 2 and a half inch business of Sunday evening. The sky looks as though we might get some more before dawn.

There was a party across the fence this afternoon and tonight Juanita A. is staying with Celeste, what with Joe being in Arkansas and J. H. in Shreveport attending some sort of a dinner tonight and gathering together with other members of the Pecan Growers' Association at the Federal Experiment Station near Shreveport on the morrow.

With the plantation pretty soppy this morning, nobody but the cowboys worked except Fug bou and August who honored me with their presence. Neither of them did much. They both seemed sober enough at dawning but by 9 o'clock Fug bou obviously had rounded up a bottle and I didn't bother to see how August was making out.

Phone service was restored this afternoon and as soon as I came in out of the rain, I began getting calls. The first was from Hazel Courager, a friend of Miss Cammie and of Celeste's. I like her alright but as she never calls me unless she has an axe to grind, I picked up the tread after amenities had been exchanged and said:

"I have some friends from out of town and I am calling to ask if you will give them an appointment, --or doesn't it go just that way this time."

She laughed and said it wasn't exactly like that but somebody from Florida, --University of Miami, is at Northwestern giving a work shop course and asked that arrangements be made for a go-round down here. Any time convenient for me would be alright but only Wednesday or Thursday in the afternoons, could be



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convenient for the Florida number and her friends. The sudden appearance of friends was too much. I have too often had somebody from some other university ask for an appointment and then brought half the college with them. I asked Hazel if she was asking me as a personal favor or simply on the request of the Miami number. She said the latter was the case. I said my Wednesday and Thursday afternoons were full-up and that I couldn't see any one either day. With grass growing a mile a minute and drunken helpers destroying more plants than grass, I have enough to do without setting aside my labors under present grass-growing pressures to waste an afternoon would be pilgrims.

I coffee-ed at 9 with Celeste who told me she had heard from the S. G. Henrys who find they have such busy programs ahead for July that they have asked to be excused from the July 4th visit that Mesdames S. G. and J. H. had stirred up some time ago, -- "putting off the visit until autumn". I was happy to hear about that since I don't want to bother tidying up non-essentials for such a visitation when so much basic stuff ought to come first. I heard from Leroy Grahame who was here yesterday with Dan Regard. He obviously liked his Sunday dinner as much as did Dan Regard and I. I don't understand how this young architect never chanced to visit Melrose before. I never met his brother or his mother and only once did I meet his papa, Superintendent of Parish Schools, when he and I were on some program or other at St. Matheew's school years back.

Such lovely ripe tomatoes and belle pepars are rolling out of the hana garden and a salade of which they decorate is awaiting me in the ice box and thither I am turning right now.....

11840

11841

Tuesday, June 19th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid with clouds looking as though they might dump buckets at any minute all day but only a few sprinkles developed.

I know not if it was the dampness from last evening's rain or a general lessening of interest in the date but whatever the reason, the famous old stand-bye of Cane River holidays passed off remarkably quiet. Nobody worked which, perhaps, was because of the sodden condition of the ground. There was some sort of a frolic at one or two of the honkey-tonks this afternoon and a dab of swinging out in the same places tonight but it all appears to be on the mild side.

I shall remember this June 19th, however, because it is the natal day of one or more peacocks. This morning about 9, Doreatha passed this way and noticed Madam Peacock with a baby in the far corner of the white garden as opposed to the nest, hard by the Yucca gallery.

Doreatha recalled that when chickens or turkeys get excited at the arrival of a single child and suddenly foressake the nest to take the little one on a tour of the big world, she sometimes forgets to return to her duty in supervising the hatching of the balance of her brood. If one takes the newly hatched one away from her, however, she suddenly remembers her chores aren't finished and although wailing about the sudden loss of her first born, heads back to wind up the job. We accordingly picked up the little one and put him in a box in the living room. Two minutes later, Mrs. Peacock was at the living room door giving on the white garden, wailing something that sounded like "It's gone, it's gone".

I immediately removed the box with its baby occupant to the bathroom and darkened the room and the little one went to sleep and its mama promptly returned to her nest and the other unhatched eggs, --three.

She remained there the rest of the day and



11841

You never saw so many belle peppars as are stuffing the ice box tonight. I guess there must be about a hundred which I am holding against tomorrow's dawn when I shall distribute them to local friends. After supper tonight I went to make a round in the Ghana garden and was distressed to discover that about 25 or 30 beautiful plants, loaded down with peppars, had been trodden into the mud. It was easy enough to see how the wreckage had been caused for in every case, the plant had stood just behind a tomato plant that drunken Aug. had stepped on while working on the garden. I only thought I would tell you how he-fu-lee I am about the things. I'm glad I planted the tree here.

54811

Memorandum:

This morning about 10, I met Madam Peacock out for a stroll with one little one, --yesterday's. Obviously the other three eggs had not hatched. She resumed her nest this afternoon but my guess is that the recent torrential rains may have effected all but the one egg. In any event, I shall leave her in peace for another day, after which, if no more blessed bundles appear, I shall persuade her the period of pregnancy is over and she must get on with undivided devotion to her nursery.. If she would only take a page from Mrs. Murgatroyd and arrange her nest atop an armchair, how much less hazardous her child-getting might be.

I saw J. H. for two minutes this noon when he introduced me to 8 or 10 pecan men, some of whom I had met before. They had attended yesterday's Pecan Growers Convention near Shreveport and had come to Melrose this morning, remaining for dinner and noon and a little pilgrimage afterward. One of the men from Atlanta and another from New York, had to catch planes out of Shreveport for their respective destinations but, in spite of



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what must have been a over-tone of urgency, none of them wanted to cut short the tour, suggesting they got something out of it as they went along.

Fugghou and August presented themselves this morning but I received their assistance with a degree of reserve. They did some work but did not carry out my direction completely. I had some friends of J. H. to look after between 2 and 4 and just as I was heading out to check up on my helpers, James appeared unannounced and remained for supper. When I was able to get away long enough to check on what wasn't doing in the planting section, I discovered a brief but snappy oration was in order and left the helpers a little stupified, -- or was it rather the wine than I.

James remained for a while after supper and I was glad to see he enjoyed the fresh tomatoes Doreatha had served from the garden. He said that he and Kay were expecting company tonight. I. S. Willard had driven to Alexandria to meet her son who was flying over from Jacksonville by jet, arriving at 5 p.m., dining with his mother in Alexandria, after which they would drive up to Pecane Park to call on the Registers by 8 o'clock, after which Captain Willard would return to Alexandria, hop back in his Navy jet and scoot back to Jacksonville, Florida. I must confess James and I both did a bit of speculating as to what he and Kay might be doing at 8 o'clock, 9 o'clock, 10 o'clock and so on and the only point on which we found ourselves assured was that we didn't have the slightest idea if it would be tonight or some other night they might expect their guests.....

11844

11844

Thursday, June 21st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and hot.

Coincidences are always so nice if on the pleasant side and today's was in precisely that category.

A little before 6 this morning I learned that Little King had just arrived in the Cane River country and an opportunity to run through the mail brought a letter from little Miss Lee, penned in the neighborhood, as the letter pointed out, where Little King had spent a year or two of his life.

It goes without saying that I rejoiced to have news of little Miss Lee but sorry to learn of the profound silence Mother Nature had imposed at just the time when it would have been so convenient to employ other means than the sign language in communicating with old friends. I rejoice that a post card, as a sort of post script regarding the affliction, indicating that something was being done in the medical field to correct the difficulty and at the same time I was enchanted to learn of the opportunity to commune with kindred spirits and to enjoy a measure of time-out to recapture various impressions of certain yesterdays. Such moments are so tremendously important in the general run of life but tremendously so under just such circumstances as were obtaining on the day the letter was penned. I hold the thought that the opportunity to be alone for a little paid off in gigantic dividends and that the interim provided a chance for the medicine to set matters right vocally.

It was so wonderfully thoughtful of little Miss Lee to give such interesting details as to places and people and tonight I am



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holding the thought that two friends of long standing  
may be sharing an outing redolent with soul building  
and happiness.

On the home front things rocked along  
busily and the day has stretched from 4:30 a.m.  
until now which is midnight. J. H. went  
to New Orleans yesterday and Celeste spent the night  
in town with Juanita A and today remained in town,  
I gather. Thanks to the absence of the bottle,  
Fugabou and August did quite a lot of work which  
should have been accomplished days ago. Around  
1:30 this afternoon, all a-drip with sweat  
as I was laboring in the Ghana garden, I  
was suddenly confronted by none other  
than I. S. Willard and son, Dan. I was delighted  
to see Dan whom I like tremendously. He was  
due back in Jacksonville, Florida, in two or three hours and  
so after an all too brief half hour, he and  
his mother headed down the road toward  
Alexandria where his jet plane awaited him. I  
S. Willard called me around 8 tonight from  
Hatchitoches to say Dan had called her from Jacksonville  
a while earlier to say he was back at home base in  
all good time. I somehow always think of  
jets being manned by a crew but obviously  
there are types operated by a single person, as  
in the present case.

James had mentioned last evening that he and Kay would  
be at the camp this afternoon but my agents reported  
at 6 they had not appeared and at 8 Kay called  
to say she had seen the Willards last night and found  
Dan just as grand as I had predicted she would.  
She mentioned she and James would probably get  
down to the camp on the morrow.

I had worked at Ghana until 7 when  
Andy who attended his uncle's funeral this  
afternoon, came to see me and to relate  
details. Burial took place down Lena  
way which is in the hills somewhere  
between Monette's Ferry and Boyce. Today's  
Enterprise carried his uncle's obituary, --  
Napoleon Bynog and I trust the  
Cane River Memo for June 28th carries a Cane  
River Memo that will make some readers sit up  
and rub their eyes about a man some of them knew but  
never dreamed of as an artist. And now I must fold,  
rejoicing over the happiness the pen of little Miss Lee  
brought me.....

11846

11811

Friday, June 22nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair with a 24 hour heat spread from 72  
to 92. I never did hear the  
Weather Bureau say anything about the arrival of summer  
but with the sun rising at 5:07 and setting at  
7:26, I suppose the maximum of daylight  
has been achieved and that gradually seconds and  
minutes will start disappearing from the broadest  
readings until they reach their minimum  
on December 21

It was so humid but so cool at 4:30  
this morning when I did a bit of fiddling  
in the Ghana garden, plucking  
vegetables for both house and generally  
tidying up rows of crisp plants. I was  
impressed by the number of large belle  
peppers on many plants, firmly attached but the  
lower half of each fruit fairly evenly chewed  
off by the white rabbits.

August put in an appearance a little  
before 6 but Fugabou never  
did come into view, having been sent  
to operate a tractor in the cotton..

The day's post contained nothing exceptional  
although it is always interesting  
to run through a letter from la Spinks which  
I shall attach if I can set my hand to.  
Sometime soon I must invite her son to  
drop his Northwestern studies for a moment and  
break bread with me. I was  
interested in the arrangements made for  
the son during his six week's summer course.  
The people in whose trailer he is staying



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are the ones who first rented and then, perhaps, eventually bought the Aswell property. I understand these people whom I have never met, have problems even as did the Aswells. I understand the husband, for instance, finds it difficult to keep out of the bottle and as a result, although gifted, he seems to be getting precisely no where. That the lady should want a cane-tive Gobelin, I can understand, if she can or cannot afford it, of course, is her business, not mine, but I shall suggest she and the artist work out the financial details, should the lady ever get around to purchasing same. Probably the Spinks wouldn't be happy if they knew their only son and heir would be consorting with the drunkard during the ensuing weeks of the summer session but if their son is old enough to take up to himself a wife in August, he certainly ought to be able to find his way about in June and July.

My morning got somewhat gummed up with people when, during the coffee hour, one of the Deblieux's from town called to say a niece of Cousin "Little" Anna Crabtree of Memphis were in town, en route to their home in California, and wished to visit yet old plantation. They did.

Between 4 and 5, Kay and James put in an appearance, finding me all a-drip. But I climbed into some dry raiment and allowed myself to be whisked off to the camp where we sat beneath the cedars and supped after dark. James confided

to me that one can never get ahead of I. S. Willard in appointment matters. The night before she had threaten to bring his son at 8 in the evening. Preparations were made fortid-bits, drinks and so on although James knew they would probably be late when Lo! instead of arriving at 8 the got there at 6, remaining only 20 minutes.....

11848

11848

Sunday, June 24th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Pure summer, all blue and gold and hot and humid.

Lots of Valley Electric users journeyed to town on Saturday morning when the annual meeting of the Board plus the annual drawing for prizes for Valley Electric subscribers took place. The artist had her grandson drive her in her new horseless carriage as far as Montrose where she mounted a bus for town to participate in the prize awards but she returned home resentful that she won nothing. Clement Coutee, another subscriber on Melrose, spent his morning helping me with the hoe. A year or two ago he attended but disdained waiting for the drawing of the lucky numbers, departing from the scene just as the drawing was about to start. One had to be present at the drawing to have the lucky numbers awarded and so when Clement's number came up, entitling him to an electric stove worth several hundred dollars, Clement was on his way back home and so the stove went to the next lucky person present. He said he figured lightning would strike twice in the same place and so preferred to remain at home.

One person on Melrose won an electric fan this year. He is Clyde Allen, son of the late Mitchel, known as the Axe.

Mrs. Walker called me today to say she had been present at the gathering and had seen Celeste whom she found looking so relaxed and rested, going to show what pulling up and down the big road will do for a girl.

I was sufficiently hot and tired after supper on Saturday night to take myself home, divest myself of all raiment and start to step into the tub when



11849

a colored girl appeared at my door and seemed surprised finding me in my birthday suit. So was I. She said the store had sent some ladies and they were in the African House. It turned out to be la Culpepper of Bayou Natchez, sister of a white neighbor up St. Mathew's way, who had 8 or 10 bags from Fort Worth with her. I tried to convey the impression that the hour was one in which I usually took a bath at the end of the week whether I needed one or not and was curious to learn the folk ways of Fort Worth people.

At dinner today, Celeste asked me if I thought it would be alright if she drove over to the camp this afternoon to see the place and call on Kay and James. I told her I thought it would and she accordingly went and I shall have a report of her findings on the morrow.

Between 4 and 5 this afternoon, when I was heading out for the guineas, peacocks and the like, in the Ghana area, I discovered Dan, wife and three girls of their emerging from the gourd garden. I gave them beets, tomatoes and so on to take home with them. After getting them off, I returned to Ghana where, half an hour later, James discovered me, inviting me to come and sup and spend the twilight hour with the Registers which I did and liked and was pleased to learn they had had a pleasant session with Celeste during the afternoon.

James had a clipping for me from the Times Picayune about the sale of Devereux to one Buckle or Buckles, a Natchez resident, I gather, whom I never knew. I believe the price paid was something like 134 thousand dollars which seems modest enough in view of the amount of grounds, contents of the house, its historical attributes and so on. I am sure it would take several times that figure were one to try to replace such a house and contents today.

I had a letter from Hatchitoches which was signed, as interpreted by two or three different people as "A. W. H." It was friendly and chatty and I assume after puzzling over the matter for sometime that I may have unraveled the identity of the writer. The only A. W. H. in the phone book is somebody named Hilton but my guess is that everybody mis-read the last letter, --H., which is, perhaps a B. making it Ann Williams Britton. Well, we shall see.....

11850

Monday, June 25th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Pure summer continues.

Road runners and secretaries collided today and I got the road runners and the secretaries got the open air, leaving me holding a card which I believe comes from the true hand of little Miss Lee and a letter from Waco which undoubtedly stems from little Miss Baldwin.

It is time for me to begin bracing myself against the 4th of July season for it can't be too far off and it always seems to be a calendar pivot around which vacationists, road runners and the bored use to swing around the countryside in search of entertainment by those like me, foolish enough to stay put and take the on-slaughter.

If little Miss Lee could see the wonderful splashes of color, produced on the plants that have grown from the zinnia seeds sent earlier in the season she would find herself altogether enchanted. They are in their prime at the moment and what with the dozens of crepe myrtles forming two sides of the Ghana garden and the zinnias dominating the central circle and various vantage points in the several parterres, the effect would delight no end. When Margaret Dixon asked me to advise her when the garden was at its best, I decided it would probably be late summer when the corcomb is going full tilt and I shall not advise her until then but I must say the zinnias and crepe myrtles, all in such a vast array of coloring, is something the corcomb can't equal. But la Dixon is currently bogged down with the Legislature and it is better that she concentrate on that at the moment in the hope that after it adjourns on July 14th, the Dixon desk will be in a happier situation to receive garden impressions.



00211

11851

There seems to be no end of talk on the radio about the Supreme Court decision of yesterday, indicating that prayers in public schools may be eliminated to please those parents who object to their children being forced to participate in rattling off a prayer. I have been a student in schools where a prayer was recited by the children in unison and as I contemplate those dim, dead days beyond recall, I can't see that the prayer meant anything at all, for everybody, including me, rattled it off with gusto and the words or thoughts made no more impression than a drop of water on Emmet's back. In my way of thinking, religion is sufficiently important to merit considerable exposure of all children to it and I think the church should lend a hand in doing so. The primary responsibility, however, it seems to me, rests with the parents and most of the parents I know have done little to set the feet of their offspring on the road toward God. Now that schools don't have to say prayers, perhaps there will be enough uproar about the Bible in school so that courses in Bible study will be introduced so that the child, as a result of this change, will in the end really get something out of the study which he did not get when a chant was the order of the day, a chant to which nobody paid the slightest heed as to meaning.

I am continuing to enjoy my summer salades and never seem to tire of those stirred up from local produce, --belle pepper, tomato, onion, lettuce with a boiled egg and a dab of dressing thrown in. On Sunday, Kay brought me a loaf of bread she had baked, bereft of salt, I think, and composed of special ingredients. I should find it a little flat for want of salt, did I not have adequate salt or vinegar in the salad but when eaten in conjunction with the salad, I find the stuff I buy at the store wonderful and, of course, home made bread has something about it that beats quantity made "stuff of life" seem like mighty tame stuff.

I am happy to report that the lone peacock seems to be growing along nicely and that the guineas have discovered a place they think nobody knows about in the gourd garden where they are amassing a tremendous collection of eggs against a July setting, I suppose. It takes the guinea and the peacock a week longer to hatch out their offspring than it does most birds, --chickens, banties and the like requiring only three weeks as against the others requiring four. And so the few herded friends proceed but Emmet and

11852

00211

Tuesday, June 26th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Summer all over the place but travelers from Shreveport report mighty rains as between there and here during the afternoon.

It was so pleasant beginning the day among the Ghana parterres, everything so fresh and crisp in the morning dew.

I concentrated pretty thoroughly in that section until dinner time when we ate across the fence, the cook having taken her mama for a check-up in Shreveport. By mid afternoon, however, the tempo increased and I had to forego Ghana for Yucca when Blythe appeared. Before she left, Dr. Talley, the New Orleans lady doctor, arrived and remained until supper time.

During supper, Sister arrived from Shreveport and when I got back from the big house, I found Kay and James awaiting me and they remained until first dark.

No sooner were they gone than three calls came in from town, one being from the lady doctor, -- Eleanor, --saying some ladies wanted to drop in on me tomorrow, --one of them having once done something to make Madam Regards last months the happier. While on the wire, the same caller spoke of my friends having a camp down this way. She said she should welcome an opportunity to talk with the husband and wondered if he understood his wife's condition and the diet matter which seems so important to the wife but seems imaginary to everyone else including the caller. I asked if she thought it was too late to correct the wife's imagination and she said she wasn't sure.

As for Blythe, she brought me an elegant blue berry pie, cooked by her own true hand. The sliver I tasted was wonderful and I propose having a go at a slab before folding up my beard for the night. She plans to



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spned about amonth with Paul King, beginning the  
latter part of August, passing a couple of days at the  
Plaza either before or after the Woodstock visit. This  
is the first time, I believe, Blythe ever drove to  
the Ganetver country from Alexandria by herself.

As for Dr. Talley, she is planning to  
move into an apartment in New Orleans, having rented  
her home. She had an excellent opportunity to  
sell her home at a handsome profit but the Court would  
not let her because she has an adopted son, 12 or 14 years old  
and there's something about protecting the  
child which doesn't seem to make any sense in  
this instance. Be that as it may, Dr. Talley and her son  
will fly to Europe next month and be back in September and  
State business will bring her up this way sometime in  
October.

The artist came to see me, bearing a gourd picture  
she had executed for me. The subject is gourds  
and is the second one that is noaccount and a cannot be  
used for a tile. What with a car and two suitors on  
her mind, Art seems to be of minor interest  
these days.

A 'phone call from The Enterprise intervenes as  
between this paragraph and the above. Mrs. Walker had  
just been talking with her husband in Baton Rouge where he is  
lobbying for newspaper interests. He was impressed when  
the Editor of the Times Picayune told him he had  
just learned from Payne Brazeale, Carmen's brother of  
Baton Rouge, that Charles Cunningham had bought the Enterprise,  
indicating that the new Mrs. Cunningham's money must  
"talk". Where Payne Brazeale got his information,  
nobody knows but Mr. Walker thought he must be talking  
through his hat since the owner of the paper himself had  
never heard of such doings.....

11854

11854

Wednesday, June 27th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy all day with the rumble of thunder sounding  
off first in one direction, then in another and continuing  
all afternoon. Finally a nice little shower developed  
a little after 6 tonight and it has continued sprinkling  
for the succeeding 4 hours until now. I  
suppose the cotton planters didn't need any rain, --  
they seldom if ever do, but I could stand a  
nice little shower on my side of the fence and  
I'm delighted with tonight's d.b. and especially  
at close of day when there will be little or no evaporation  
during the night so the plants may get a maximum of good  
from the moisture.

I believe I solved the mystery as to the initials  
"A. W. H." I think it must be Mrs. Homes from whom, on  
occasion, I have purchased George Feyer records. I never knew  
her first name but someone mentioned Amelia Homes in casual con-  
versation and I gathered she must be the lady. I  
shall get someone to consult the 'phone book to discover the  
address and acknowledge the letter which was certainly  
much ado about nothing.

Our Shreveport visitor remains with us and  
threatens to honor us with a longer visitation  
a week or so hence. She envisions going to  
Corpus Christi to visit Tina McInnis next week and then  
will come the return treat here. Her  
brother with two of his three young daughters came  
down for supper tonight. The ice berg that dominated  
the table between them was impressive, especially  
as the praise of the sister for the  
brother has been so lavish during the past  
year.

I continue quite behind the times so far as radio news  
is concerned. Last evenings' visitations  
and this morning's outside employment denied me  
access to the air waves and both this noon and  
tonight static put Chinese firecrackers  
in the box but I couldn't have  
rounded up my news regardless since baseball games were



11855

pre-empting news time and everybody knows that  
-- two or three hours of play-by-play  
baseball constitutes something much  
more important than keeping up with  
what goes on around the globe.

If I think of it, I shall attach an article about  
Sylvan Friedman by Margaret Dixon. The article is  
just right for its present purpose,--to  
keep the Friedman name before the public prior to  
the jelling of gubernatorial announcements  
a year or two hence. It has been frequently said that  
Sylvan will probably run on Russell Long's  
ticket, should the latter make up his mind  
to run for Governor. As to your own  
interest in the article, it would scarcely  
be worth your time to glance through it. I thought,  
however, you might enjoy seeing Sylvan and Liz of whom you  
have heard occasionally and whose names you may have  
run across in the local paper.

Mrs. Walker called to ask my advice on  
a point. Cousin Arthur Watson, it seems, called her  
husband to invite him to go to New Orleans  
to attend a pow-wow being staged for better  
Government, only three or four people  
in the Parish having received invitations and  
these, I believe, were Cousin Arthur, J. H. and  
Mr. Walker. As Mr. Walker is in  
Baton Rouge, Cousin Arthur thought it would be nice  
if Mrs. Walker went with him and his wife. Nobody seems to  
know just what the better Government boys are up to.  
I shy away from much interest in the thing since all the  
names I have heard are either big wigs in business,  
the law or labor unions, which certainly sounds like an  
odd combination. I recommended the lady  
accept the invitation, not so much to find out what is  
cooking as to publicize the fact that she  
and the dominant legal and political power  
in the Parish will somehow, possibly without knowing it,

11856

Thursday, June 28th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy following last evening's  
half inch of rain with another shower of  
about the same amount around five o'clock  
this afternoon and the cloudiness continues into  
the night. The shower dropped  
the thermometer from 90 to 72 so that in spite of  
the humidity, it is quite pleasant.

I was altogether entranced when the post  
arrived bringing me a joint message, as  
of the 24th, from little Miss Lee and companion.  
I am the happier tonight, thinking of them  
as being in the midst of congenial  
happiness.

I seem to be comparatively a lone  
this evening but the lid may fly off at any  
moment. J. H. left this morning for Alexandria where  
he caught a plane for New Orleans. I did not  
see Celeste at the coffee hour as she had  
already gone on a frolic, I suppose, and had  
not returned by 6 and whether she will return  
tonight or remain in town, I know not. Sister took off  
for town this afternoon but I did not  
know she was going and I know not if she is  
returning tonight or not. She and her younger  
brother or rather her youngest brother seem  
to be somewhat cross with each other and  
no words were exchanged during noon day dinner  
as between them.

Mrs. Walker called at 11:30 this morning  
to say she was proceeding to New Orleans with  
Cousin Arthur and his wife where Mr. Walker  
will join them and they will return  
Saturday. I suppose J. H. will attend the same  
Better Government meeting in the Crescent City  
but I assume he will get back tomorrow or tomorrow  
night. That pretty much  
leaves me at the moment as Master of the Hound without  
anyone to contest the office.



11858

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I spent much time at Ghana today but did get a few 'phone calls when in the Yucca area,--mostly from people who took the trouble to say they had read and liked "Cane River Loses an Artist" that appeared in today's issue of The Enterprise. About six o'clock tonight, Andy, nephew of the H. Bynog artist, passed this way to say his cousin, son of the late H. Bynog, had passed this way today and had told Andy I had written a piece about his papa which he thought very nice. I doubt if the hill billies read the column much but perhaps somebody called the son's attention to the fact that his papa's name appeared in the Cane River Memo. Be that as it may, I am glad the son thought the article was nice.

Early this morning, after gathering some okra, beets and tomatoes, I passed through a couple of the corridors form by the vines which have now spread a tender green ceiling over the arbors. It was the first time this season I had discovered gourds there and I found some quite pretty ones and a few of odd shapes which will delight Blythe, come autumn. I notice there are some thin ones about two feet long and I suppose these are from seed of last year's go-round when some four and five foot ones were harvested and hung along the Yucca gallery to lend an arresting note to others in the collection.....

11858

11858

Friday, June 29th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid with a brisk shower at 4 this afternoon, followed by dazzling sunshine overhead and much dampness underfoot.

"The peace that passeth all understanding" enfolded this bend of the river tonight, Shreveport having returned to Shreveport, right after noon.

I was happy to have a 'phone call from Natalie, reporting receipt of a card from little Miss Lee that delighted her. She thought it sweet that in the message, reference was made to her own vacation plans and the early August departure. I believe she has a flock of problems, especially at school, that are taking up much of her time so that the days prior to her departure speed swiftly along. Dr. Cornwall, head of the Department of which she is a member, was chatting with her at school yesterday, I believe, when he suddenly fainted away. The lady doctor was summoned, the college physician, an ambulance and so on but on regaining consciousness, Dr. Cornwall refused medical attention and wouldn't enter the ambulance. He fainted a second time and John was summoned and when Dr. Cornwall regained consciousness again, he said he would, as a matter of courtesy to the President of the college, accept the ambulance service and was accordingly taken to the Hatchitoches hospital. He, --Dr. Cornwall, says he has too much to do to undergo tests at the present time but another member of the medical staff reported that for ten years Dr. Cornwall has been putting off surgery and so



11859

11859

everyone feels pretty gloomy about his prospects. In the mean time, he and Natalie have been working on a TV educational thing for early autumn release and how this new twist in affairs in going to effect that isn't known for sure.

James came this way about 6:30, inviting me to run over to the camp to join Kay which I accepted. I was so happy when James responded affirmatively suggestion he might like some ripe tomatoes. He said he hadn't had any in months because it is impossible to buy locally grown tomatoes in the stores. It seems all such vegetables on the local market are picked when green in Florida or the Rio Grande Valley and distributed to stores all through this area so that the quality of things like tomatoes are but definitely not of the vine-ripened type. And so we rounded up quite a bit of plunder and off we went to lap up some Borden's ice cream on the gallery above the river and have a delightful hour of chit-chat.

I am mighty pleased to report that Low Paul rejoined the family group late this afternoon. I can't recall how many weeks he has been absent, following his jaunt down the river from his home here with Louella. The latter seemed pleased no end to welcome him back but, like all stupid males, he was quite haughty about the whole transaction.

Junita B. came to pay me a surprise visit this morning, bearing a fine cake she had baked on my account. It is always good to see her and she had much to tell me about life in Pecan Park where she and her husband and children seem to be doing just fine but where the husband's father seems momentarily miffed because he feels he and his wife don't get enough attention from his son and family. I had to do a bit of juggling to ward off an on-slaught by the local daughter of the house who wanted to take a slap at her nephew's wife but the latter got back to her car without misadventure and so things spin.....

11860

11860

Sunday, July 1st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and warm throughout the weekend.

The peace was so pleasant, following the departure of the week's visitor and the people passing this way so pleasant, I feel brimming over with vim and vigor.

Saturday afternoon was especially to my liking. Ruth Pierson, --Madam Beaufort's half sister, came down by appointment, bringing Dr. and Mrs. Richie of Amherst, Mass., Hampton Carver from town and some lady from Shreveport. They are all delightful people and I was happy to have many an interesting detail about Amherst, the Emily Dickinson house and so on.

Ruth told me how the Cane River Memo about Caroline Dorman had made the rounds. She said she had sent her copy to Cousin Ida Chapman of Covington who in turn sent it on to somebody else from whom it went to another individual who passed it on to Mr. Herierson, whoever he is. Ruth thought the single copy had done as much as could be expected of one column, especially as she had seen those through whose hands it passed busied themselves in procuring cards mentioned in the column.

Ruth said she sent last Thursday's column to Cousin Ida, too, --"Cane River Loses an Artist", knowing that Cousin Ida is fond of James and would be glad to see his name as patron of the Arts.

There was a slightly hilarious note in the afternoon go-round when Ruth upset a platter, piled high with cherry and pear tomatoes, --dozens of them, that ran every



00811

11861

which-way, under sofa, chairs, tables, etc., in the living room, with the five guests all down on their hands and knees rounding up little tomatoes, and, by golly, I do believe they rescued them all.

James came over this afternoon around 4 to transport me to the camp to sup with him and Kay. I took the opportunity on the way over to tell him the lady doctor had remarked in a 'phone conversation the other day that she would be happy to chat with him some time about his wife's condition, especially regarding the diet which, I gather, both husband and physician feel is unnecessary.

Sunday evening supper included Ghana tomatoes stuffed with shrimp and mighty good they were, too, --tomato and shrimp. During the past couple of weeks Ghana tomatoes have rolled abundantly in at least six different directions and I have no doubt in several directions of which I know not. Thus far they have been usually lush and while the larger variety will probably exhaust itself before summer has run its course, the cherry and pear varieties will keep rolling along right up until frost time in November and I am especially glad for those people in town who cannot get vine ripened ones and who find the local brand to their taste.

I find myself holding the thought that the vacationists are finding excellent fare in the holiday and no end of rest and relaxation and matters of genuine interest to both may be characterizing this summer interlude.

11862

Monday, July 2nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

A beautiful hot summer's day.

Carmen called me this morning to report an item from the Shreveport Times, stating that Edith Porter has returned to Louisiana, following a European tour and a visit in Connecticut. Apparently Edith had a grand trip. Her letters while flying about gave an impression of vast satisfaction with every place she went and sedate disappointment when chopping weather at Capri prevented a visit to the Blue Grotto. No one around here has heard from her since she got back to the United States early in June but we shall probably be hearing from her shortly. Her brother in Baton Rouge who is suffering from cancer is in delicate condition but happily has made it courageously until now and I'm glad Edith may now see him. At one time she contemplated giving up her European tour because of her brother's health but, and very wisely it seemed to me, she changed her mind and I understand her brother was very happy that she decided to make the journey. I suppose it must be about time for the Stirlings of West Feliciana to be homeward bound by now. The daughter sent me a timetable of their trip but I never did write them while they were away.

Joe Henry came to see me this afternoon and everything was lovely. He wanted to invite me to a birthday party for J. H. that Joe is giving at his Pecan Park home the first Saturday following the birthday which comes on a Thursday, I believe. He reported that he and Juanita A. journeyed to Briarwood yesterday and found Miss Dorman at home and,



11861

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11863

according to Joe, expressed much satisfaction with the article I had done about her a month or two back.

I passed by the store around 1:30 and J. H. said Fugabou was too drunk to operate any machinery in the hayfield and he had accordingly sent him to give me a hand. J. H. thought Fugabou might be able to hoe perhaps. J. H. has the vaguest if any concept of what a drunken hoehand can do to a vegetable garden, especially where many of the rows of newly planting things are just coming out of the ground. I made a round at Ghana and did not discover Fugabou in the garden, thank heavens, but rather behind Ghana at the base of the big pecan tree that usually figures in photographs of that little old cabin. He was fast asleep and took pains to guide Joe's steps in another direction later when he asked if he might get some vegetables from the Ghana garden. Fugabou was still asleep when I went to supper but had awakened when I left the big house and he said Howdy and I said Howdy and that was that.

While at the camp yesterday, James showed me some recent Hunter creations that are stunning. She has been doing some abstract things at his suggestion that are really wonderful. Both he and I tried to figure out how it is she is capable of doing such wonderful things along the abstract line at the moment and either will not or cannot toss off a fair primitive composition which I have been trying unsuccessfully to have her turn out for me. She has turned them out alright and they aren't worth the paint used in painting them.

Somehow I succeeded in eluding all the broadcasts of news during the past 24 hours but I hope to get caught up on one or another of them tonight. I did hear Morgan Beatty tonight but he never mentioned Algeria which I assume voted for independence yesterday and he said nothing about the Mexican visit of the Kennedys about which I should have liked to hear something. It's odd how one can skip pages of contemporary history without trying.....

11864

Tuesday, July 3rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and warm, with heat sufficient to bring on a dripping shirt within a few minutes of labor under full sun but sufficient breeze out of the southwest to dry the same shirt in a few minutes if placed in sunshine on the fence where a breeze could pass through it.

Eara sought me out in the Ghana garden about 10 this morning to say there was a young lady inquiring for me at the store. I asked him to have her come to Yucca which she did and I found her a delightful person. She is living in San Antonio although her parental home is Yucca. I didn't ask details but I am under the impression she is here to do some writing about this locality. I am wondering if Sister Frances Jerome has any finger in this pie. The young lady's name is Williams and said she is staying with the Dubreuil family,-- mulatto, who live across the river a house or two from St. Augustin's Church. Vaguely it seems to me I remember Celeste having said something about a young lady and a young gentleman of color coming here from somewhere to do some research. Miss Williams who is rather darker than local mulatto folks, must be the young lady and, come to think of it, I do believe I remember some of the plantation folks saying something about a young gentleman of color staying at Ashley's camp a mile up the river. So that as it may, I am looking forward to helping either or both if I can during the next month.

I sent a message to James by Dereatha this noon. I have waited too long for Fugabou to bring me some water hyacinthes from Bayou D'Arbonne behind Montrose and thought James would be just the person to give me a hand on just a safari, as, indeed, he turned out to be. He passed this way about 2:30 and in a jiffy we were at Montrose and beyond where we found the bayou choked with the loudest blanket of pale green foliage.



11863

according to Joe, expressed much satisfaction with the article I had done about her a month or two back.

I passed by the store around 1:30 and J. H. said Fugabou was too drunk to operate any machinery in the hayfield and he had accordingly sent him to give me a hand. J. H. thought Fugabou might be able to help perhaps. J. H. has the vaguest of any concept of what a drunken hoehand can do to a vegetable garden, especially where many of the rows of newly planting things are just coming out of the ground. I made a round at Ghana and did not discover Fugabou in the garden, thank heavens, but rather behind Ghana at the base of the big pecan tree that usually figures in photographs of that little old cabin. He was fast asleep and I took pains to guide Joe's steps in another direction later when he asked if he might get some vegetables from the Ghana garden. Fugabou was still asleep when I went to supper but had awakened when I left the big house and he said Howdy and I said Howdy and that was that.

While at the camp yesterday, James showed me some recent Hunter creations that are stunning. She has been doing some abstract things at his suggestion that are really wonderful. Both he and I tried to figure out how it is she is capable of doing such wonderful things along the abstract line at the moment and either will not or cannot toss off a fair primitive composition which I have been trying unsuccessfully to have her turn out for me. She has turned them out alright and they aren't worth the paint used in painting them.

Somehow I succeeded in eluding all the broadcasts of news during the past 24 hours but I hope to get caught up on one or another of them tonight. I did hear Morgan Beatty tonight but he never mentioned Algeria which I assume voted for independence yesterday and he said nothing about the Mexican visit of the Kennedys about which I should have liked to hear something. It's odd how one can skip pages of contemporary history without trying.....

11864

Tuesday, July 3rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and warm, with heat sufficient to bring on a dripping shirt within a few minutes of labor under full sun but sufficient breeze out of the southwest to dry the same shirt in a few minutes if placed in sunshine on the fence where a breeze could pass through it.

Ezra sought me out in the Ghana garden about 10 this morning to say there was a young lady inquiring for me at the store. I asked him to have her come to Yucca which she did and I found her a delightful person. She is living in San Antonio although her parental home is Waco. I didn't ask details but I am under the impression she is here to do some writing about this locality. I am wondering if Sister Frances Jerome has any finger in this pie. The young lady's name is Williams and said she is staying with the Dubreuil family,-- mulatto, who live across the river a house or two from St. Augustin's Church. Vaguely it seems to me I remember Celeste having said something about a young lady and a young gentleman of color coming here from somewhere to do some research. Miss Williams who is rather darker than local mulatto folks, must be the young lady and, come to think of it, I do believe I remember some of the plantation folks saying something about a young gentleman of color staying at Ashley's camp a mile up the river. Be that as it may, I am looking forward to helping either or both if I can during the next month.

I sent a message to James by Doreatha this noon. I have waited too long for Fugabou to bring me some water hyacinthes from Bayou Derbonne behind Montrose and thought James would be just the person to give me a hand on just a safari, as, indeed, he turned out to be. He passed this way about 2:30 and in a jiffy we were at Montrose and beyond where we found the bayou choked with the louliest blanket of pale green foliage.



11865

festooned with pale lavender flowers that somehow always remind me of the usual hyacinth flowers, so I guess they are well named. I had taken a bucket and a rake with me but although we did use the rake, we really didn't need it, what with the plants coming right up to the little wooden bridge on which we stopped to reach down and gather in our horticultural specimens. I n a singledip of the rake into the mass of vegetation, we drew out five plants with just one lift and as three would have satisfied me, we immediately turned around and came back home, James returning to the camp right away as Kay was napping and he didn't want to leave her alone too long. He said she didn't sleep too much last night and so was getting a little extra today. My guess is that she probably has such a blank schedule that sleep is something that seldom follows the exhaustion most people experience daily. James said, knowing how fond, --smile, --Kay and I are of firecrackers, he and found some for us to explode on the morrow and asked me to come over to join them on the terrace to observe the 4th in the afternoon. I shall have a fairly busy day on the morrow and suggested 4 or 4:30 as a likely hour.

J. H. called me from the store about 7, saying he had just cut a fine watermelon and asking me if I didn't want a hunk. I said I did and Lo! a huge section turned up before I could turn around, making me wonder for the millionth time what he thinks my capacity must be. But I had not difficulty in finding a famished secretary to lend me a hand. So turns the world on the even of the grand and glorious 4th and may things be equally grand and glorious where the travelers may tonight find the

11866

Wednesday, July 4th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and warm.

It was the quietest 4th I can remember and one I liked enormously.

The plantation didn't work, except Andy who came to give me a hand in the afternoon. Tuesday at supper, J. H. said Doreatha could come this morning to give me my breakfast and that we would break bread across the fence so that Doreatha could have the balance of the day off. I told him it was no holiday for the cook if she had to be-stir herself to give breakfast and that I could make out fine on my own hook so she could plan her day without getting it bogged down with breakfast. Accordingly I dined or rather broke my fast on figs and cream and liked the quiet of my own situation where I could commune with God and think about far away travelers and relish the taste of the fresh figs and the lousiness of a dewy dawn.

interruption.....

Carmen just called, --she seldom calls at night. She wanted to report that Edith Porter's brother died in Baton Rouge between 7 and 8 tonight. She, Carmen, had been called from Baton Rouge by her brother, Payne Breazeale, who lives across the street from Vernon, and Payne had been trying to get Edith in Shreveport but couldn't track her down. Finally Carmen reached her at 9:15. I am glad Edith made it back from Europe so that her trip was not saddened.

At the same time Carmen reported that



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11867

plans had been made to remove Vernon Cloutier from Beaufort to a hospital for further X-rays but it was discovered he was so weak and that he would have such a brief period of consciousness ahead of him that it was agreed all around it was better to let him remain at Beaufort. Aside from Parkinson's Disease, his backbone collapse and so on, a cancer has developed in one lung, an assortment of afflictions, any one of which would be too much. Everyone feels so keenly for Vernon, he is such a grand person and must have had such a three ring circus during the past 20 odd years of marriage. I feel sorry for Beth, too, for Vernon's death is going to require no end of adjustments and such requirements are always to be regretted. I hope Vernon's condition will not effect Ora's plans for August. I suppose everyone concerned must be thankful that Vernon is being granted a little time to put things in order before his departure. I am under the impression there is a tremendous debt. Whether there is sufficient insurance to ease the ultimate strain, I know not.

I worked quite vigorously all day and felt exhausted when, a little after 4, I decided it was time to fall into the tub and get on some fresh raiment to go to the camp. The artist called when I was in the tub, asking if she could send a man over to see the place. I sent Andy to the gate to meet the man, a very dark negro lawyer of Milwaukee who, incredibly enough, is married to one of the Chevalier girls on the river, --a fact that must depress the mulattoes no end. While James who had just arrived waited, I gave the Milwaukee lawyer a quick go-round with a suggestion he return on the morrow. Then I journeyed to the camp where, although tired, I enjoyed the quiet under the cedars and supper with Kay and James and thus ended by 10 a 4th of July that I liked.....

11868

83811

Thursday, July 5th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and 90-ish.

It was so nice discovering a message from little Miss Lee in today's post. It is so pleasant thinking of the travelers in the birthplace of our favorite 18th century composer, the cathedral and all. Surely such a stop is bound to be one of the high spots of the vacation. I am equally sure of the pleasure all around when the other two vacationers could establish contact with wife and mother and an old friend. I am wondering what the sensations may be like to see the child, already many years to his credit, approaching the parent one has counted on as such a good friend for so long and if one notices physical and mental characteristics in the child one might not have remarked upon so readily if one had not known the parent so well, etc., etc. We must eventually touch on this subject at some subsequent sitting.

I suppose lots of people around the country felt as I did today, in that Thursday seemed so much like Monday, following Wednesday the Fourth. I forgot to ask at supper how the plantation force stood up in the wake of yesterday's frolic and swingout. I did hear that Fug, bou was mighty high last night but that was scarcely in the bracket of news. It was Monday or Tuesday, I forget which, that he stopped his tractor in the hay field, crawled under it and went fast to sleep. Another day he slept all the afternoon behind Ghana, as I may have reported, and whether he came to work at all today or merely took



11869

a differnt line by remaining at home to keep the bottle properly tilted, I know not.

I didn't see my neighbor across the fence at the coffee hour. She was in bed most of yesterday with a summer cold but felt well enough to be up and in town this morning before 9 and this afternoon was persuaded to leave with some of her girl friends to spend this afternoon, tonight and tomorrow at Hot Wells, down Alexandria way. I never fail to marvel at the swiftness of a child's recuperative powers.

I must write a letter tonight to somebody in Shreveport who wants to photograph interiors and exteriors of a flock of ante bellum houses, --black and white and in color, as illustrations for another gentleman who wants to write a text for the book, stressing plantation aspects, --I assume old houses of the plantations, not stressing as do all other books the ante bellum side of the story but rather the post bellum to present segments of their careers. I think the public wants to dwell on the ante bellum side of the story rather than the contemporary side of such subjects. It was explained in the letter that the man who proposes to write the book would have to come on Sundays as he works six days a week. All this sounds a little on the Ramsey side, --excellent to contemplate but not very likely to be undertaken.

I see the guineas every day but less and less frequently and take it they are busy be-getting families. It is pleasant to report that the baby peacock continues to present a hail and hearty appearance and seems to have grown daily since birth on June 19th. I wish I knew if it is a female or a male. I should like a hen to balance up the families neatly.....

1588

Friday, July 6th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and hot

A few people appeared unannounced this morning but some friend of Pat's, a Mr. Hoover, living in Pecan Park, had brought them and, as on former occasions, he had given the tour before reaching Yucca and I was delighted to let them go on their way.

Among this year's wedding invitations comes one from a Shreveport matron whose daughter is to marry one Joseph Patrick Kelly. I didn't remember hearing of either bride or groom but Celeste told me the other day that Pat Kelly is the boy who used to be at's friend back in the 1940's. It is possible I saw the ~~beginning~~<sup>beginning</sup> of the end of it. I don't remember reading about it so many wedding invitations are issued.

I plucked some ripe tomatoes and took them to the cook shortly before supper so that she might prepare them for the table. She said her grandchildren had had such a busy time of it around noon today. She said James had brought the little ones a watermelon and they had a wonderful time going to work on it.-- the first they had had this season and perhaps the first they could remember ever having tasted.

I don't know whether the children or James gets the larger share of pleasure out of looking for each other. He is forever hunting up candy and things for them in town and they are always chattering like magpies whenever they see his car approaching as it turns in at this end of the bridge to head for the camp. He always finds time to come to a halt and chat at them a little and although they are a little on the taciturn sid when he stops, they are all talking at once as soon as the car begins moving again. ....

Dr. West of the Theatrical Department at the college, called



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11871

this afternoon to say the actress from New York who is going to have the lead in the production being put on next week at Hedges Gardens is with her and wishes to get down here sometime this weekend before going over to the week's engagement at the Gardens. Being a little uncertain about my Saturday and Sunday arrangements, I told her I would call her back on the morrow. Ehsy with one thing and another, not to mention the thermometer in the 90's, I'm inclined to slow down a little on appointments these days.

When I did go to supper, I found J. H., Eugene and James entering by another door. James had gone to the store to purchase something and J. H. had insisted on him coming to supper and it was pleasant, at the end of supping, to stroll in the cool of the Ghana garden. At supper, J. H. reported having been to see the lady doctor J. H. said that both of them had read the Cane River Memo, both of them had known Napoleon Bynog and that neither of them had ever suspected he was an artist. I responded that the time to bring up the matter was appropriate since the gentleman on my left, --James,-- had the finest examples of the wood carver's Art and the owner could speak for their merit, to which J. H. laughingly exclaimed:

"Well, I'll be damned."

Labor goes on in the fields these days and I should think everyone would be exhausted at the close of day but there has been a dance, well attended I am told, every night since last Friday with one going on tonight and others for Saturday and Sunday in the offing. What magical slippers the field hands must possess being thus able to kick up their heels nightly after such wilting days in the sun.....

11872

07811

Sunday, July 8th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot.

The Weather Bureau speaks of the likelihood of hot dry weather just ahead. Verily in these parts, July and August seem to have been made for just that.

It is this kind of weather that either comes at the same time or be-gets revivals going and I have no doubt we may expect them to begin at almost any time now. With a solid week of the kicking up of heels nightly at the local honkey-tonks, one may readily gather that fervor of one kind or another must be circulating with gusto. I haven't had a very good report concerning activities Saturday night but the grapevine did mumble something about two cars from the Sheriff's office having conducted quite a number of honkey-tonk parties to jail in the town, indicating that all the recent hoe-swinging and endless frolic got nobody too much down.

I was happy to hear Natalia's voice on the 'phone yesterday. She spoke of her delight in having heard from little Miss Lee. She continues her plans for the European jaunt with her husband, I am glad to learn. I had thought the uncertain state of her Beaufort brother-in-law might tend to be- cloud the agenda of everyone in that family. I gather her husband is taking everything in his stride but I gather the other brother, J. H. W., is inclined to be made overrisome by all the doings, bad enough so far as the patient is concerned but made worse by the carryings-on of Madam Beaufort.



11873

Natalie mentioned that a record of African music of which she had spoken on her last visit here had come to hand and said she would be enchanted to run down any time on the Sabbath if that date were open. Unfortunately the weekend hasn't been exactly open although it has been somewhat void. I had expected friends from the East coast either Saturday or today but they never did show up and I have felt constrained to stay glued within reach of the 'phone, expecting from minute to minute, day to day that a call would come through indicating their approach. That kind of appointment is something that could be arranged better but I am stuck with this one and hope to avoid parallel ones in the future, --a definite day at least, and preferably some notion as to which part of a particular day. These folks whom I haven't seen since 1939 are motoring to California via the southern route and returning by way of the northern and so I have felt constrained to "stay put" but thus far to scant result.

James came to see me this afternoon around 4, with a view to whisking me away to sup with him and Kay at the camp but of course I had to decline, expecting a call or a visit from minute to minute. His steadiness of spirit is remarkable. I confided to him that the Walkers were thinking of inviting the Registers to sup out one night this week and then proceed to Hodges Gardens for the theatrical presentations being given there this week I thought he might like to know about the possibility of an invitation in advance and he voiced appreciation. He said he doubted if Kay could accept, however, as it appears she has been sleeping days of late and not sleeping at night which must make things difficult all around. From the evenness of his manner, however, one would never dream there were any problems at all.....

11874

Monday, July 9th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hotter.

The hour is 9:30 at night and the thermometer stands at 85, reminding me of Manhattan nights when the heat of the day is so slow about tapering off after sundown.

It has been a busy day and although a little tired, I find myself not at all sleepy. My thoughts during the past half hour have concentrated so much on the little chapel because I am possessed of such a profound feeling of gratitude to God, especially for little Miss Lee always and for the smoothness with which today ran its course.

Kin folks, expected Saturday, called from Vicksburg Sunday night, saying they would arrive in Natchitoches by car at noon today. They called at noon saying they were in Winfield and arrived here at 3. My especial thanksgiving to God on this particular occasion was the quiet obtaining locally where we saw nobody, had a pleasant tour and then journeyed to town where we supped and, before doing so, got the five travelers installed in a comfortable motel against the night. After an early supper, we drove about the Parish, the nicest stop being on Little River at St. Mary's-on-the-bayou, where the young folks were enchanted when an armadillo put in an appearance and quite unafraid, came up to them to see, probably, for the first time in its life, what white folks looked like, so few white folks ever discover St. Mary's-on-the-bayou. Back to Yucca at first dark, a stroll in the hana garden and thence to St. Giggins fountain for a peaceful hour of conversation when, at its conclusion, we said good night. Their journey begins



11811

11875

again early in the morning, --generally westward, --Texas, Arizona, California, Utah and thence back to the east coast and I'm glad I'm not making the jaunt although it is said present day motels make traveling stops restful and withal pleasant.

This afternoon I learned the Vernon Cloutier was taken from Beaufort to the Hatchitoches hospital in a coma. Although the spark of life might be kept burning for months, I suppose, at the same time it is said it might flicker out any moment. However things turn, let us hope it may not put a crimp in the plans his brother-in-law has for the European jaunt in August.

At Beaufort, Beth has been keeping things at quite a pitch, it is said. Everybody in the nursing profession has avoided getting tangled up in an establishment where things are so peaceful at one moment and in such an uproar the next. Typical of the situation is the fact that on Sunday when the household was quite dependent upon the assistance of relatives and especially on plantation colored folks to do the endless things required in such a set-up, Beth suddenly decided the people of color, many of them servants for years, were inefficient and fired them all. Fortunately Vernon has a couple or three bothers on neighboring plantations and they and their wives have been nobly lending a hand. As for Beth's own efficiency, and she undoubtedly has much at times, during all Vernon's illness, no arrangements had been instituted for providing a bed pan and in Vernon's desperate condition, it was necessary for one of his brothers to assist the patient from his bed to the bathroom. I am consumed with pity for the entire family, most of all Beth, I guess, for Vernon is beyond consciousness and Beth is bound to have some difficult days ahead. And on this sour note I fold up, hold the thought the while the things may be going wonderfully for the European travelers.

11876

11811

Tuesday, July 10th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continued hotter.

The busiest soul on the plantation today was one of the peacocks. I never saw anything like the way he stuck to his job. I rigged up a lookingglass about 14 by 28 inches perhaps, placing it on the ground in front of the African House and invited the bird over for a dab of biscuit. He took one peck at the biscuit and then caught sight of a pretty bird in front of him and from that second on for the balance of the daylight hours, he scarcely moved away. Once in a while another Mr. Peacock would come along to see what was up or Madam Peacock with child would pass that way but none of the visitors, not even the child peacock, was permitted to remain in front of the mirror, the first-comer having staked his claim of discovery on the magical piece of business and his it was and his he intended it to remain. So far as I could observe, and I didn't spend too much time checking on the matter, the bird was simply fascinated by what he saw. Probably he didn't know it was his own likeness and yet he didn't seem antagonistic as he might well have felt had he supposed it to be another bird. He made no attack on this incredible intruder but he frequently placed his beak right against the glass. Why he discouraged the other peacocks from enjoying what he saw, I know not. He didn't seem to resent their presence unless they got in the position of greatest reflection of his own fine self and when he pushed them aside, it wasn't the usual vigor displayed when an argument is in progress but more a firm insistence that they keep out of his favorite spot. At no time did I see him elevate his fine fan or make any gesture of parading in front of the glass, being quite content to put his beak up against the glass and marvel at what he saw. Perhaps cutting a fine figure in front of the thing will come at some later day but as of the first dawn to dusk adventure, this was simply fascination and no manifestation of satisfaction with himself but merely curiosity at what he saw and an uncontrollable impulse to keep on looking throughout the live long day. I shall probably



35811

11877

have additional points to report from time to time as  
he and when and if his associates get better acquainted with the  
whole intriguing mystery of the bird in the glass.

I am still contemplating the happy circumstances  
of the peace and quiet obtaining around and about this  
bend of the river yesterday. Miracles do happen  
every now and then and I shall never cease praising God that  
things turned so pleasantly as they did. Even  
the peacocks behaved and failed to tear the twiling quiet  
into shreds.

Sister arrived, so far as I know, unannounced  
this noon. She plans to remain until  
Saturday, she says. There were California  
travlers this afternoon claiming kinship  
to the Henrys and gladly turned them over to her.  
It was a sister of Cousin Josephine Gruenwald and like Cousin Josephine,  
perfect in deportment and largely possessed of ideas not  
much above oysters. Sister brought me a cake  
and said she had been talking with her former  
husband this morning and that he had sent greetings  
to me. Why she should have been in contact with  
him and why he should, if he did, have sent greetings  
to me, I wouldn't know.

I am profoundly impressed by the peace that I find  
all about me, stemming, I believe, out of the gratitude I feel so keenly for yesterday's quiet.  
Things can probably be wacky enough as between  
now and the Sabbath but somehow nothing  
will strike me quite as pungently as it might, had  
I not found myself blessed with the  
balm of gratitude for yesterday's quiet.

A nice cold salade awaits me  
after I have knocked off a couple of letters, --  
tomatoes, belle pepper cut fine, a leaf of sweet basil, a piece  
of onion, a couple of boiled eggs cut medium fine, a dab  
of maitaine, a couple of drops of special vinegar and the whole  
well stirred and chilled and I think I shall rest.....

11878

35811

Wednesday, July 11th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Vaguely hotter, --around 100., but  
withal quite beautiful and every once in  
a while a vagrant breeze.

I feel almost shame-faced to say it but I might  
as well confess I am once more a grandfather, about  
twelve times around.

Last evening when parked on the front gallery bench with  
the current visitor, I thought I detected a peep from  
atop the armoire. Naturally I said nothing to  
excite my visitor and the resulting to-do about properly  
attending to the birth of a dozen grandchildren. By the time  
my visitor had departed and by the time I was sure there  
wouldn't be a return visit, it was dark and so I simply left the  
peeping uninvestigated. At dawning, however, I mounted  
a stepladder and discovered the blue Bantie and her dozen  
little ones all snug in the fine cardon nest fashioned for them  
last month. Madam Bantie protested a little when  
I lifted her and her family in the box down to gallery floor  
level. But the children seemed ravenously hungry when I offered  
them a fine breakfast of corn muffing, broken up fine, and a glass of  
water all around. The mama did the usual amount of  
clucking and fussing but although she would never admit it,  
I believe she was grateful her offspring were finding themselves  
in reach of food. Within half an hour, mama and biddies were  
strolling in the shade of the banana plants, taking passes at  
lush looking grass and generally getting into the  
strike of a bantam's way of life. I am bound to cast  
about before the end of the week to find homes for  
these newest arrivals. I keep on giving away so many and yet  
God in His abundance always keeps filling in the  
gaps caused by the gifts so that I  
find myself possessed of an embarrassment of riches  
in the feathered friends section.



87811

11879

Just as I turned the page, Carmen called me to read me a speech in the Legislature, made by a nephew of her brother-in-law, Jack Durant, or however he spells his name, who lives with Carmen as husband of Carmen's sister. Carmen had tried to get me all day but without success and wanted me to hear the speech before she sent it to California to kin folks out there. It was a blast at the present Administration which is certainly pushing the State into bankruptcy as fast as possible and a timely pronouncement but one that will probably cut little ice. Carmen also reported that the Episcopal Church had a fire in the roof area this afternoon. She said the firemen did wonderful work. Mrs. Walker had reported earlier that the firemen did a most inept piece of business at the fire, among other things, being unable to get water flowing from the hose since they weren't able to turn the faucet to let the water come out after the hose had been connected with the hydrant, fifteen minutes having elapsed between the time the hose was connected and the faucet releasing of the water and, of course, a quarter of an hour is quite a while when property is burning.

In tomorrow's column I shall touch on different kinds of tomatoes currently flourishing in the Ghana garden. Whether mention of tomatoes will be timely for most readers, I know not but I felt it might be so for me, if I ever read the thing, since I had spent most of this afternoon gathering a bumper assortment of the various types of vegetable. Nobody but you and I know it but Ghana is supplying five households right along with tomatoes and it appears everyone, including me, seems satisfied with this year's production. I wish you might see the eggplants that are so big and full and violet at the moment, -- a vegetable which never could possibly come up to taste by way of equaling its beauty as a feast for the eye.....

11880

18811

Thursday, July 12th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot-hot.

The blessings of the postcard, the sources of infinite delight these days and especially is this the case in cards coming from thither and yon from happy vacationists reporting ideal weather in their travels and indications on all points of the compass that all has been going so pleasantly. I am so grateful to God that little Miss Lee is being able to deposit so many happy memories in the current vacation bank, -- deposits that may be drawn upon forever in the years ahead with richer dividends paid annually as the present season may be viewed in retrospect in days to come.

Another item.

Just before the supper hour while I was standing on my head at Ghana, none other than James suddenly appeared. He invited me to sup with him at the camp which I accepted in the flicker of an eye lid, happy to enjoy the quiet on the margin of the river and peace at the board. The fare was delicious and the peace heavenly. I found the dessert a little super-charged and should have preferred any one of the three ingredients going in to make up the generous portion, a combination of ripe figs, lemon and coconut ice creams. James loves ripe figs and I like them, too, and they are especially good with vanilla ice cream, I think. It has been so long since I have had any lemon ice cream, -- I got so used to lemon in sherbit, I had almost forgotten how it came out in ice cream. I had never had coconut ice cream before and believe, as with the lemon, I should like it best if served by itself. By combining the flavors, -- I suppose the



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11881

lemon and coconut, the resulting taste suggested peppermint and somehow peppermint has a warmth about it that doesn't seem to jibe with the cold of ice cream. I think I prefer my recent enthusiasms in the ice cream section, --walnut or wild mountain berry of the Borden persuasion. I must inquire if his super-market carries grapefruit ice cream for, as I recall, that was a mighty fine business in the old days and it seems to me there was a plain cherry that was alright, too.

We had a shrimp cocktail, generous in shrimp and couched in a wonderful sauce, --a Kraft mix of some sort with the tomato sauce added and it certainly was fine. The individual platters in the resistance department contained an ample supply of hearts of artichokes, some kind of pressed beef, hunks of grapefruit and pineapple, I guess, old fashioned store cheese, potato chips and some kind of a relish with a body. Iced orange juice was the liquid served and before I got to the bumper of the fig-ice cream combination, I had already dined amply.

James dropped me off here a little after 7, asking me to give Kay a buzz to say he would be seeing her anon. I couldn't reach her but talked with her later and learned she had been for a ride and on to the Country Club with I. S. Willard. I'm glad the girls had their little outing while the boys were gorging themselves at the camp. And so spells out this day and now I must do some mail and then fold.....

11882

08811

Friday, July 13th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The weather continues cloudless and hot. At supper tonight, J. H. actually expressed the hope we might get a shower. This is so unheard of on the part of a cotton planter that one can but assume it was more the pecan grower and cattle raiser speaking. I haven't begun watering the Ghana garden as yet but shall feel inclined to start within a few days is a dab of moisture doesn't put in an appearance.

There is general satisfaction expressed all around at the peace currently obtaining. Sister returned to Shreveport this noon and everyone can get on with life once more and it certainly is pleasant.

At supper last night with James, I learned something suggesting that there may have been elements in the Segleau household that might explain in part one or another of the reasons for Bob's decision to return to New York, leaving Patty behind. The information has nothing to do with Bob but it does throw some light on Patty's set-up that suggests a dab of confusion on the domestic side. It seems that several months ago, Kay ordered a dress for Patty's daughter from a specialty shop Kay has long patronized in selecting dresses for little friends around the nation. The shop is said to be tops and everyone has always been enchanted with gifts coming from it. I suppose the dress may have been purchased in New Orleans in December and delivered by the shop to the Segleau home. Kay never did hear from Patty about it until



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one night this week when Patty called Kay and talked ten or fifteen dollars worth of conversation, and the primary subject, returned to over and over again, was the dress. It seems Patty's mother didn't think the dress suited her granddaughter and took it back and exchanged it for another. This exchange business went on over and over again until finally the specialty shop, tired of the tomfoolery, told Patty she could have the money for the frock as they couldn't any longer hope to satisfy her or her mother. The shop notified Kay of their action and that was that until Patty called Kay to thank her for the gift, explain why so many returns were made and so on. At the same time, she asked Kay to tell me that she she understood Dave Doogan or Duggan has a Cane River Harvest tile I sent by him to Patty last winter and that she will be getting the aforesaid tile shortly and will thereupon write me. I had completely forgotten the tile thing but in view of the dress business, it sounded to me that mother-in-law trouble might have contributed to some of Bob's here-to-fore lamentable doings, which, as I now imagine, may well have been sparked on the family hearth. Be that as it may, Patty told Kay Bob is coming to New Orleans but whether this means Patty has heard of it as a rumor and will see him not at all, as previously, or if this indicates communications between them or what, I know not and care less.

J. H. called me from the store about 7, just as I had come in from Ghana where I had plucked about 75 or 100 vine ripened tomatoes. J. H. said he had nobody to send me a watermelon but, if I cared for same, he would be glad to wait until I could make a round. It didn't take me long and I liked it.

Miss Dornon has written I. S. Willard to bring Kay up for luncheon next Wednesday at Briarwood. This will delight James since he favors all the girls getting together, I am sure, and can think of lots of things he would rather do himself than go to Briarwood.....

11884

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Sunday, July 15th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continues hot and dry.

Clara Genung, who is Mrs. Walker's mother, lives alone in a pretty little house, most comfortably appointed. Her ice box is a late model and includes an ice making gadget which works automatically, dumping ice cubes in a little basket every now and then.

This morning she was fiddling with her Sunday household chores when somehow the first two fingers of her right hand were adjusting something in the ice making section when the gadget automatically clamped down on the fingers and there she was and wouldn't let go.

There was no one else in the house and as the building is tightly built, her cries would not carry far enough to reach anyone. And so her fingers began freezing and she couldn't unplug the current. She discovered there was a way to switch the ice forming fixture to produce water, but the water was boiling and the choice between freezing and boiling offered little by way of a choice. And so there she stood for about an hour until her daughter chanced to drop in.

She rushed her to the hospital where the lady doctor and Dr. Kaufman worked on her. It would appear she may lose her two fingers but in spite of the condition of the flesh, there is a chance amputation may not be necessary. Let us hope.

The misadventure brings up many thoughts, the worst being, of course, the feeling of pity for the agony the poor thing must have gone through during the hour she was being frozen, and unable to get away from the contraption holding her in its grasp. Another thought, too, has to do with the manufacturing of such a machine that exposes the unsuspecting owner to such hazards. Surely the elimination of such a hazard



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should be the first order of business for the company putting such a box on the market.

As for local doings, it was all wonderfully peaceful and much to my liking. The clerk's wife brought some people from town by appointment on Saturday afternoon and her 12 year old son came along in hopes of catching some banties,--a job on which he worked hard but without success.

James came at 6:30 and he, Kay and I sat on the terrace of the camp until a little after 8. The moon was lovely and a pleasant breeze swept up from the river which made a nice companion piece to the cantelope, furbished with ice cream, on which we concentrated between moonbeams.

This afternoon James returned and around 5:30 we supped at the camp and again sat beneath the cedars while the moon did all sorts of pretty things with lights and shadows and it was 9:30 before I got back here.

I. S. Willard had remarked on the 'phone Sunday or rather Friday night that she thought Kay would be more contented if she had something to do and I think this is quite true. Kay, which surprises me, not at all, doesn't like Pecan Park. Why she should be living there in the first place strikes me as odd enough. Kay likes the camp which she finds as pretty as anything of the sort one might find in Louisiana but,--and the but is important, for a gain she doesn't have anything to do and I think it a marvel that James keeps such a remarkable balance.

In the butterfly lily section, the buds are beginning to take shape and before the month has run out, we shall see what we shall see.....

11886

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Monday, July 16th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continued hot and dry although some places north and south of us got as much as three inches of rain during the afternoon. It seemed a little cooler toward sundown but at 9:30 tonight the thermometer still stands at 80.

According to custom, I arose at dawning and proceeded to the center of the Ghana garden where I turned on the faucet to which I keep a hose attached, leading to the Unicorn House where Lou Paul and Louella are currently dwelling in its wire enclosure. They always seem to relish splashing about in the water early-early.

An hour and a half later I returned to the faucet to turn it off but before reaching it, I was surprised to see a whole parterre of vegetables under water. On investigation, I found the faucet and hose were securely attached to each other but a second hose, always attached to the first to extend the water flow to the Unicorn was missing. Why anyone should have separated the two hoses where joined instead of taking the first one off the faucet, I cannot imagine. But so it was and so I began casting about the plantation to discover what had happened to the missing section. Of course I never found it but it didn't take long to figure out pretty exactly where it had gone. Joe and Juanita A. had come to Melrose Sunday afternoon about 4:30 when James and I were leaving for the camp, as I learned from Celeste who had seen them in town later. I gather Joe, on seeing the extension hose at hand,



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had thought it a likely extension for his own hose in town. His mind works so much like Sister's that such an appropriation would be perfectly natural. The hose is orange in color and readily noticeable and an agent in Pecan Park will have no difficulty identifying it if it is there. The store figured out where the missing item had gone and immediately ordered a new hose for Ghana. In the mean time, Low Paul and Louella aren't dying of thirst, thanks to the availability of other portable conduits.

I was delighted to be able to talk with Mrs. Genung this morning. Madam Walker had spent the night with her and called me on two counts, --to report that patient's night had been a good one and secondly, to invite me to a small riverbank gathering had her house on Friday night in honor of some college gentleman, hailing from Germany, I believe. John and Thelma, Kay and James and perhaps 15 or 20 other people will be present. Meat pies, beer and so on will be on the menu. I accepted only tentatively. Everybody is so kind about offering to take me to and fro but I incline to balk on the thought of anybody carting me home again, following such an evening and I certainly don't intend staying in town.

Madam Genung came on the wire and gave every impression of being in good form. She says it appears she is going to retain her fingers and also the finger nails. She says she prefers being active about the house, doing what little chores she can with one hand and thus helping Father Time to push his hour hand around the faster. I still feel distressed whenever I think of the poor thing being hung up for an hour in the ice making section of her refrigerator, alternately freezing and boiling.

And so I break off, having in mind the while the vacationists and holding the thought all may be turning delightfully.....

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11888

Tuesday, July 17th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot until this afternoon at 4 when a dandy one inch rain descended upon us, reviving the sagging vegetation and providing a breath of cool air all around. We needed the rain and were lucky to get it since it extended over a limited area,-- the Joyous Coast to the north and Cloutiersville to the south getting none.

The day's post brought news from little Miss Lee, whose excursion draws to a close. I am so happy so many interesting places have been filed away in memory for many a pleasureable hour when they may be consulted over and over again in the future.

In the post at the same time came a letter from Helen, telling of her mother's death in June at 94 and of a weekend at Old Bonita where it appears little Miss Ramsey maintains her accustomed pattern of procedure. I am glad Helen is having the trip to Seattle for I think she loves such jaunts and I can only pause while pulling weeds to wonder at her physical stamina.

I talked with three ladies on the 'phone tonight, sitting here by the picture window, lights out, gazing at the white garden, new washed, and glistening in the full moon.

I spoke with Kay first. She expressed the hope I would be with them on Friday night when, according to her version, the Walkers plan entertaining the Registers, the scientist from Germany and me, --cocktails at the Walkers,



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followed by dinner at the country club. I told her I hadn't decided about attending, having in mind the necessity of someone driving me home afterward. She said she and James would love to and that she must get out more.

Next I talked with Mrs. Walker who spoke of food on the river bank and quite an assortment of guests, none of which sounded like the country club. I mentioned my uncertainty and she said she and her family would deliver guests if so desired.

I wanted to take up one or two matters with I. S. Willard although, since it was 9:15, I foresaw the possibility of getting bogged down, as, indeed, I did, for it was 11:05 before I got disentangled. She had so much to say about today's Fort Board meeting, college library problems and Heaven knows what all. She said she was not going to Briarwood on the morrow as Kay had some appointment although I suppose it was persuasion that counted when the Briarwood jaunt was mentioned, belatedly, at home. Everyone marvels at the I. S. Willard luck on the highways and I fancy James was genuinely concerned about the prospects of Kay being entrusted to I. S. W.'s care.

I am delighted to report a steady increase in the number of humming birds all during the current season. Like so many of their associates, they seemed to take to the woods in recent years when dusting of cotton got started. This year, instead of using dust, the air planes use a liquid which doesn't seem to drift about in the air and apparently isn't so devastating outside the insect population. Thus the increase in the number of birds and especially the humming variety who are probably as impatient as I for the butterfly lily department to get going.....

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11890

Wednesday, July 18th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair weather throughout last night and until noon today when clouds took over but no more rain fell although everyone is holding the thought we may get some more. Shreveport suburbs got an inch during the day but only sprinkles down this way. It remains cloudy and if a couple inches more fall before fair weather returns, all will rejoice.

I was delighted to have no interruptions all day and accordingly had an opportunity to put to rights some of the quirks effected by yesterday's wind gusts,-- cutting off broken limbs, setting canes and butterfly lilies upright from their flattened positions and generally tidying things up. I welcomed the opportunity, too, in being blessed by the comparative coolness and shadow to transplant things such as sweet basil where ships have developed in some of the parterres. To anybody else in the Parish, it would seem a humdrum day but it gave me an opportunity to commune with plants and my furred and feathered friends and to project thoughts in the direction of vacationists afar.

It seems to me the palm trees are blooming later than usual. I noticed their unmistakable sweetness on the early morning breeze but did not get an opportunity to discover which ones are in flower until this afternoon.

Andy came along as I was scanning the palm trees and when I called his attention to the aroma permeating the air, he sniffed twice and then opined that it put him in mind of that powder the ladies use.

I could readily appreciate his comparison and I, in



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turn, delighted Andy when giving him some freshly plucked okra to take home with him. I expressed the notion that freshly gathered okra exudes an aroma not unlike that dominating a blacksmith shop when the blacksmith is shoeing horses. I'm not sure one would agree with me in such a formula.

The flowering palm is to ladies' powder  
as a horse's manicure is to fresh cut okra.

but Andy and I always like examining things in the realm of vegetation and I always learn more from him than he possibly can from me.

Okra, by the way, is producing abundantly and I gathered enough for the big house, the house across the fence, for Andy's house and the artist, not to mention a flock of belle peppers and about two bushels of tomatoes. For a garden laid out primarily for design to delight the eye, this year's effort seems to be doing fairly well to satisfy the stomach.

I was reading something about the house of Medici night before last and was impressed by a reference to the enormous scope of their transactions which figured not only in the main European communities from London to Constantinople but even extended into India and China, it was stated. I did not know before that the Medici, perhaps beginning under Cosimo, transacted business for the Vatican, especially in collecting Church revenues throughout Europe for the Roman Pontiff and their percentage in this particular service during the first year netted the banking house the equivalent in today's money of thirty seven and a half million dollars which must have made that account a very profitable one. And now I must do some mail and then fold, my thoughts turned in the direction of little Miss Lee...

08211

11892

Thursday, July 19th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continue humid and sweltery. Somebody must have received a dab of rain somewhere around for there was the roll of thunder late this afternoon and a breath of fresh air was astir shortly afterward but our skies remained solidly sunny.

Today's Cane River Memo had something to say about the African House murals. I might have expected but somehow didn't think about it, --that no sooner than the paper struck the street than the telephone began ringing with people who had seen the column asking for appointments to come and view same. I responded negatively to each but opined to what advantage the paintings could be viewed at Pilgrimage time.

I had hoped to hear from Natalie one of these days but possibly I shall encounter her tomorrow night at the Walker party. I am holding the thought she hasn't dreamed of relinquishing her European jaunt because of Vernon Cloutier's condition.

Carmen called me this morning to report she had run into Beth at the Post Office this morning and that la Beaufort had given her an endless rigamarole about Vernon's state of health. Everybody knows how delicate it is and how impossible it is for him to survive but when one listens to Beth, the story gets so wrapped up in contradictions and impossibilities that one can make no sense out of anything the wife sets forth.



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I was reminded of the old expression about having bees in one's bonnet when I discovered this afternoon that the fact was I have them in my bushes. This afternoon I noticed that they had established themselves in the nandina bush just at the corner where one turns when going to or from the big house into the little path leading to the Yucca gate. They were swarming there the other day but I thought they were merely taking a temporary rest before deciding on a permanent home. Today, however, I noticed they have already built a house about the size of a football and give every indication they are quite satisfied with the new site. One brushes against the bush every time one uses that path and something tells me I had better persuade them to locate themselves in some locality where there will be less chance of people bumping into them.

James dropped in at 4:30 this afternoon and remained for supper and, as always, his presence at the board added to the general gaiety. We were only four, including J. H. and the clerk but as James and I tend to eat more leisurely than they and as J. H. was in a slow hurry to go to observe the air planes just starting to spray the cotton, James and I had the board pretty much to ourselves.

I. S. Willard had promised to put a color shot of gourds in the post for me yesterday but it didn't arrive and I tried to reach her by phone several times between 9 and 10 tonight but without success. Perhaps she and Kay were comparing notes or making travelogue plans for another try at Briarwood. So runeth the day and so I must fold up my beard and try flattening out a little.....

52811

11894

Friday, July 20th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and hot.

James came between 4 and 5 and we drove to town, stopping at the Town House for a bite to eat. James had told Kay he thought it a good idea to eat something before going to the Walker party, for although the Walkers had expected to take us on to the country club, following their doings, it seemed well to get a little fortified in advance, just in case.

And so we picked up Kay whom we had assumed had had some of her special dietary food before our arrival and I looked over some wonderful primitives,-- mostly flowerstudies, which C. Hunter had done for James and wondered at their excellence.

And so we found ourselves at the Walkers on time, as between 6:29 and 5:30, and were escorted to the back of the house and down the three terraces where, on the lower level, we found quite a group of people already assembled. Presentations were made all around and Kay, placing her crutches beside her, sat down on an armchair that seemed comfortable and engaged in conversation with some ladies while James and I moved over to a peach tree, guided by Thelma Kyser, to the place where a fine keg of beer was a point of popularity.

There we were presented to Herr Reichart, or some such name, whose home town is Hamburg, and we talked about European matters very pleasantly for a while. James had never been down to the dock and I wanted him to



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see the view to compare it with that of his camp further down the same river. Mr. Walker escorted us with re-charged plastic steins of beer and some wonderfully hot little meat pies about the size of one's thumb. It was all very pleasant and the weather had tempered a little with the setting of the sun. Back on the terrace with the other guests, Mrs. Walker invited me to make a personally conducted tour of her garden. During the season, she has often asked for my advice on one point or another and she was pleased to acquaint me with the situation of the various plants and bushes about which she had asked. The place is beautifully maintained and I was enchanted with the whole effort.

We withdrew from the party about 8:30 and as guests were still wandering about, there was nothing said about fried or boiled shrimp at the country club. When we got in the car, Kay said she hadn't eaten anything and was hungry and so we proceeded to the Town House where a special preparation of broiled chicken was ordered and while she dined on that James and I had ice cream and it was all very pleasant.

On the morrow, the Kysers will take the Walkers to Hedges Gardens for a supper picnic and the presentation of Carrousel in the evening and on Sunday, the Walkers, with Mrs. Genung and Ken, junior, will come here early in the afternoon to get some shots of the African House, after which I shall join them in proceeding to the Register camp where we shall sup.

The hour advances and, following a busy morning and afternoon and a social round tonight, I find myself pleasantly sleepy and shall enjoy the feel of the pillow beneath my head.....

11896

10811

Sunday, July 22nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continued hot with an occasional overcasting of the sky that tempers things somewhat, especially when a vagrant breeze tones things down a little.

And today the miracle of the butterfly lily took place at 11:10 this morning, ushering in a parade of fragrance for the balance of the summer. Naturally I thought of little Miss Lee, wishing she might be along side to inhale the first marvelous perfume of the 1962 season.

There seemed to me lots of activity around the plantation this weekend, a variety of doings although none of them of major import.

Saturday night the tires of a cattle trailer were lifted by somebody, thought to be a non-resident. The vehicle was parked somewhere around the geon hour or garage, out in the open and readily within view of the public road.

I fear J. H. didn't get much morning rest, what with a plantation scuffle that had to be attended to, starting at 4 a.m.

Celeste told me about it over the demi-tasses this noon. Carrie Morin, her house girl, was at the honkey-tonk on Saturday night. One of the Metoyer boys, a son of Edward, who is one of the plantation overseers, offered to drive Carrie home. But instead of doing that he drove her somewhere off into the wilds of the Montrose hills and raped her or so the story goes, although as I saw her driving her brother's car this afternoon,



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I assume the ordeal wasn't too unkind. The Metoyer boy has been in a mental institution before and probably will retire again for another session.

One interesting twist to the episode had to do with communication with J. H. It seems Carrie must have run away from her escort or been deserted for she saw a light in some remote farm house and walked to the place and got somebody to bring her to Melrose. That was 4 o'clock. The family awoke J. H. to see about having the Sheriff track down the culprit which J. H. did. Around 5:00 or 5:30, J. H., having returned to his downy couch, was awakened by the telephone. The call was from the Sheriff's office in town reporting that the Sheriff and deputies were in front of the Melrose store and wished to speak with J. H. As you know, one can see the store from J. H.'s front gallery and why the Sheriff didn't walk over to the house and consult with J. H., I know not. It seems the Sheriff's car spoke with the Hatchitoches office by radio, directing the office to phone J. H. which sounds like the roundabout, complicated way to establish contact.

The Walks with offspring and grandma came this afternoon at 2 and took many pictures, mostly of murals, I believe. At 4 we drove over to the camp where the grown-ups sat under the cedars while the Walker boy fished. We had cold beer, waiting the arrival of I. S. Willard who was to bring the Vermouth for the Martinis. We finally had a gin drink without Vermouth for I. S. W., naturally, didn't arrive until supper time. The food was grand and the serve t from town, a Metoyer, dispensed delectables with neatness and dispatch. And by 10 I was back home and as the hour now advanceth, I shall fold.....

38811

11898

Monday, July 23rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continued hot and humid. The thermometer stood at 83 at 8 o'clock this morning. I suppose it probably touched 100 this afternoon and is in the 80's tonight at 10.

The flurry of the weekend seemed pretty well simmered down today. At coffee across the fence, the brew was served by the young lady participating in the early morning Sunday doings. I am under the impression was a near-rape rather than a rape. And it is quite possible, too, that, even as in other sections of the world, words meaning one thing in one particular neighborhood may well mean something else in another. The notorious confusion spread across conference tables around by the Russians in using different interpretations of words tends to crop up occasionally in many another quarter and I suppose what one person may mean by rape may signify something quite different to somebody else. I must eventually consult both the American and the French dictionaries for a definition of the word rape, although what each or both may set forth may not necessarily apply to local understanding. I suppose the word rape as it appears in European usage frequently means abduction and that abduction and rape doesn't in any way pre-suppose sex as an element in the doings. The Rape of Proserpine seems to have been a subject that appealed mightily to sculptors and painters from the days of the Greeks down through the 18th century at least. I suppose the Rape of Europa was and may still be a painting of some popularity. --the one depicting Europa as a comely miss on the back of a bull, the latter said to be Zeus in one of his many disguises.



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Zeus has such a reputation for being a playful old gentleman that I suppose the abduction of little Miss uropa may have had sex impulse somewhere in the fringes but there is nothing in the painting to suggest same. The beautiful marble statue in the Versailles gardens, centering the marble circle constructed by Mansard, --arches interspersed with fountains, --that statue, as I recall, suggests that Pluto or some duner world character has lifted the lady into his arms and is heading out for home, --the subject matter providing splendid opportunities for the sculptor to show his skill in handling two such figures in a joint bit of doings but surely there is nothing in this rape either that suggests sex, as the word, so often used in English, tends to imply. Well, so much for tremors up and down the local river and the return of a placid surface to the stream.

James dropped in around 4 this afternoon. He is busy doing things to the camp and is apparently happy. Kay had sent me some potato salad and tonight I called her and she revealed that James was upset on his arrival home around 6 tonight when she told him that she and I. S. Willard are driving to Briarwood on the morrow. James insisted that the girls round up a colored youth to accompany them hat with I. S. Willard's car not being in too perfect condition and neither gal capable of doing much by way of tracking down assistance in that somewhat remote region, should something get out of whack along the way. Why James wasn't asked to go, I wouldn't know. Perhaps he was. I am quite sure, however, that he wouldn't be too amused to spend a day with the three ladies at Briarwood, especially in this sizzling weather.

I have a couple of letters to write, after which I shall take up the tomato and belle peppar salad awaiting me in the ice box and that ought to just about round out the day.....

11900

on Napoleon Bonaparte  
Death of an Artist.

Monday, July 23rd, 1962.

Welcome home.....

All rocks along as usual.

Natalie liked this column

best of the summer efforts and so I send it along as a sort of greetings.....



11900

on Napoleon Bynog  
Death of an Artist.

Monday, July 23rd, 1962.

Welcome home.....

All rocks along as usual.

Natalie liked this column  
best of the summer efforts and so I send it  
along as a sort of greetings.....

11901

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Tuesday, July 24th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot.

J. H., J. H. Williams and Jarued Pratt  
drove down to Baton Rouge to attend some sort of a  
meeting today. I can but marvel how all  
three can't possibly relax for a day but must wear themselves  
out when not operating on home soil by pulling  
up and down the big road.

While in Baton Rouge, J. H. called  
the S. G. Henrys. The General's wife was at home  
and reported an unsatisfactory vacation during the past couple  
of weeks in Arkansas, -- of d l places. I think  
both the senior and junior families and Madam General's brother and  
wife made up the party. I find it so odd people  
never learn that one way to have a successful vacation is to  
get away from the family for a little while, -- a feeling  
that has made me rejoice so much this summer over the  
arrangements little Miss Lee made to achieve and outing.

The Shreveport radio this noon and tonight gave  
much of its 15 minute news cast to an accident  
in Shreveport in which one Nancy Cavet, -- I know not  
how the name is spelled, -- figured. Nancy Cavet is  
Madam General's niece, an only child of Sam and Bootsie  
Cavet, and Sam isn't well and Bootsie  
is always in and out of the psychiatrist's  
couch and their daughter doesn't live with them but  
maintains an apartment somewhere in Shreveport.  
According to the radio, Nancy, driving her own car, struck  
a girl, hurling the victim some 80 or 90 feet, and  
killing her. It seems the same Nancy struck  
somebody else a while back, severely injuring same and a few  
months before that, struck somebody else, killing same.  
Two deaths and one injury and the Shreveport radio stations and  
newspapers are asking how it is a person with such  
a record has a driver's license. The radio  
mentioned tonight that when the other killing and injury took



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place, some action was started about investigating the wisdom of letting such a person drive. The inquiry was directed to Baton Rouge where it was shelved. Now it is said another inquiry has been started and during the interim, the young lady's license is temporarily suspended.

he girl has been here but I don't seem to remember anything about her but I am quite sure the kin folks must be having a very unpleasant time at the moment contemplating the girl's record to us far.

Celeste had a card from Sister, asking her to get five copies of the Enterprise carrying the Cane River Memo about the African House murals which Sister will pick up shortly, according to the card. One concludes another visitation is in the offing.

continue seeing the one white male guinea and his companion, the gray guinea, around and about. he second female guinea, also gray, is mighty busy these days, parked on a fulsome nest of eggs, tucked beneath a nandina bush along side a crepe myrtle along the border west of Dr. Miller's cabin sort of back of the African House. Guineaas --- so often lay 40 or 50 eggs,--many more than they can possibly cover, that I have no idea how many times I may expect to become a grandfather on this go-round. I saw the boxer in that section of the garden this evening. He has a great weakness for guineas and peacocks and I hold the thought he did not discover the expectant mother

I found another belle pepper producing bright red peppers and I am setting aside one of these with a view to drying seeds for more rows of the same stuff for next year's go-round in that quarter. I think the green leaves of the pepper plant make a splendid background for the crimson belle peppers as big as one's fist. And so road runners run and sloths stay put and everybody to his own inclinations.....

11903

10211

Wednesday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot, -- the hottest day this summer, according to tonight's 10 o'clock news cast out of Hatchitoches.

I sweltered through the morning, passing this way from the Ghana garden several times between 5 and 9 whenever a dry change of clothing becamea pleasant prospect. James called at 8 to ask if I would join him at the camp for a noonday snack. I would. He picked me up a little after 11 and we sat for half an hour on the gallery over the water where a wonderful current of air from the south tempered things wonderfully and seemed just made to go with the excellent bottle of beer ames served before lunch. I believe he gets the beer from ew Orleans but it might be some other place. Be that as it may, it seemed to be obtainable from the point of manufacture and it is manufactured, -- unlike so many other brews, in one place only. It is called Miller's and I never heard of it before. It is as pleasantly smooth as any brand I ever drank.

I was mildly surprised to learn that Kay and I. S. Willard did not journey to Briarwood today or yesterday or whenever it was they made their second elaborate set of plans to make the trip.

ames couldn't go with them, --after all, so far as I know, he never was asked. Be that as it may he had two excellent reasons for not wanting to go, --he finds the deep summer heat at Briarwood mighty devastating, and, secondly, he wanted to do some preliminary work at the camp in anticipation of having carpenters to help him on this coming weekend. Whether he is



80011

11904

wise in discouraging the Briarwood jaunt by the two ladies is for an authority better equipped to decide than I. He views I. S. Willard's driving with a dubious eye. He feels a guardian angel watches out for her in the non-chalant fashion she operates a vehicle but doubts if one would be justified in supposing a single guardian angel might be expected to possess a wing-spread of sufficient width to enclose a second person in the car. The Willard car has 85 thousand miles to its credit and Ames feels that figure in itself constitutes a hazard. Well, anyway, Kay was persuaded not to attempt the jaunt and that was that. Among other things to bring off the hejira, I. S. Willard spoke of getting a gentleman of color to accompany them but that didn't pan out as the gentleman turned out to be of the ripe old age of 13. An offer was made on I.S.W.'s part to buy a new car for the trip but somehow that didn't turn the trick either. As to what I think about the whole business doesn't matter. I can see James' point of view perfectly and at the same time, had I been in his shoes, I should have sent the ladies off with my blessings -- and fears. Verily, Kay needs to circulate more, --not on trans-continental journeys but around and about among her Mississippi valley and Cane River valley friends.. It is so easy to solve other people's problems and I don't intend attempting same.

After a delectable lunch, I was back home at 1 o'clock and put in a busy afternoon although around 3, I did take half an hour to cool off, tanks to some Wild Mountain Berry ice cream, --Borden, -- which Ames had brought me. It provided no end of stamina for the balance of the afternoon and I am already looking forward to another sample when bedtime rolls 'round. It would be so nice enjoying a detailed travel report by little Miss Lee over such a bowl of Mr. Borden's finest.

11905

80011

Thursday, July 26th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and eventually temperate.

Great was my surprise and delight this morning when a message by air came to hand indicating that by the time I received it, little Miss Lee would be within closer range through telepathy.

In pursuance of a suggestion in the message, I communicated with Natalie who, obviously from the conversation, was more or less surrounded. She was delighted to have news and reported she proposed getting off an air mail letter forthwith. Her plans for the August vacation continue regardless of Vernon's uncertain status. He remains in the hospital, sometimes conscious and sometimes not. Other people conversant with the case tell me this condition could obtain for a second or six months. It is my understanding that all legal matters, as handled by Natalie's husband, have been put in order and from a business point of view, his presence here at the time of Vernon's departure, isn't required. I am glad plans for the trip are going strait ahead.

One of the striking facts to impress me in little Miss Lee's communication had to do with the weather, --so perfect in the south, so imperfect in the north. If there had to be a period of imperfection, I am glad it did not transpire when the best part of the outing was in progress.

Our heat wave of yesterday continued through this noon when black clouds rolled up in the Bermuda area, giving out a little rain there but sending us down this way only some cooling breezes which were vastly appreciated.



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Today's Enterprise will go forward as formerly beginning with tomorrow's out-going mail. Contrary to original intentions, I found it worked out better to wrap up each issue as it appeared and these will go forward every couple of days until all have reached their destination. I thought I had them so arranged that I would be able to mail them in proper sequence but my arrangements, unknown to a helper, got all mixed up when a shelf was cleared and so they will go forward haphazardly and I trust the mix up will not make them to confusing on the receiving end.

I learned today, quite by chance, that a contractor from town will begin printing the winter dining room and the library of the big house either on the morrow or starting Monday.. Celeste has mentioned two or three times in recent months that she is going to have all the books removed from the shelves before the work starts. The idea is a good one but I'm going to do no worrying in advance as to where the thousands of volumes are going to be housed during the job. The operation is going to eventuate in a three ring circus, any way it is approached, and I am going to do my best to keep as much out from under foot as possible.

Juanita B. called today to say she has some relatives up Shreveport way who have long threatened to expire if they couldn't visit Melrose for a little tour. Juanita asked if I could carrying out the matter on Sunday. I told her that would be just fine and if we weren't through by 4 in the afternoon, she could take over when I departed for the camp. I haven't even been invited to sup at the camp but I reckon I shall be. Juanita said Pat and the children were just fine. I haven't seen the junior member of the family but perhaps I shall by Sunday.

The day to day dabs, set down during vacation, go forward under separate cover. Nothing of interest is to be found in same but they will fill in the gap since last three was a communion.....

11907

11907

Friday, July 27th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy with the thermometer in the moderate 80's. Fort Worth got 15 inches of rain in 30 hours and probably would have been glad to share a few drops with us since we continue dry-dry.

Today's post brought a card, mailed before the one that came to hand in yesterday's mail. Today's was penned when the good companions were saying Goodbye and it was heartening to learn again that the outing had been so pleasant.

Natalie called this afternoon. Their plans go forward concerning their departure from Alexandria on Saturday morning, a week hence. They must leave home fairly early for they catch a plane between 6 and 7 in the morning and I believe the schedule calls for arrival in Rome, via Lyme, on the same day. How planes and people do whiz. It is my understanding Bishop Greco makes this Alexandria to Rome run quite often and says it is altogether satisfactory. Natalie said she wasn't sure how often the Bishop makes the trip but mentioned that it possibly was as many as 16 times in a twelfth month which certainly suggests frequency. It is said he is, among other things, an excellent business man and his hops, skips and jumps in and out of the Holy City suggests he may well be an important cog in the vatican machine.

J. H. continues his incredible pace and I wasn't surprised to learn over the coffee cups he isn't sleeping well. His agenda today, following days of being all over the place, called for his departure at 5 this morning to travel by car to Lake Charles to attend a 10 o'clock R.E.A. meeting and another appointment back home between 1 and 2. I saw him at supper and he reported the Lake Charles meeting



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a pleasant one and said Sam Jones made an excellent speech. He thinks the ex-Governor is through with politics so far as being a candidate for any office is concerned. I assume, however, that ex-Governors usually don't bow themselves out of politics any more than do ex-Presidents.

Last evening at dusk-dark, I noticed that some of the smallest bonties were having a hard time flying up into the old magnolia by the big pot where their mama be-takes herself nightly. Mama hasn't much sense or she would instruct her youngsters to roost in the mandina bushes until they develop more wing strength although at least half of the youngsters can make the steeper grade into the old magnolia without any difficulty. I recalled the ladder built for the guineas a year or so ago and removed it from his place near the Unicorn House and placed it over Yucca way and I hope the youngsters found folding up their beards easier tonight. They had better begin practicing higher flying soon, however, for with two guineas currently setting, I reckon the young guineas are going to need the ladder for themselves one of these days before long.

It didn't take me long this afternoon to fill up a market basket with eggplants from the Ghana parterres. I plucked only about a dozen but they were fairly ample in girth and it didn't take long for the basket to be filled. I guess there isn't any vegetable quite so imperial in appearance as the eggplant. I rested the basket on a bench while I went to attend to some other chores and when I returned, an angel's trumpet, six or eight inches in length and as snowy and pure in whiteness as the eggplants are rich in their deep violet and the aforesaid trumpet had, when unfolding, rested atop one of the orb-shaped gobs of deep violet and the effect was entrancing..

I am holding the thought the breathing space between now and Monday may afford the vacationish an opportunity to relax a little before the new whiz gets under way.....

11909

Sunday, July 29th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and dry.

Saturday was election day in Louisiana and the candidates expected to win won. The magic of the name of Long swept Russel Long back into the Senate and his cousin Gillies Long was chosen from this 8th District as U. S. Representative.

Russel's opponent was some gentleman, a New Orleans or Baton Rouge lawyer, born in Natchitoches, whose name is St. Amand. I always liked the name of Saint Amand because another Saint Amand was one of my favorite historians of the 17th and 18th century. I found his books my constant companions in childhood but, oddly enough, I never knew anyone else by that name and never heard anyone mention the name until Saint Amand announced he would run against Russell for the Senate. I am quite sure he realized nobody could beat Russel but possibly offered to run with a view to getting his name before the public with a view to running for some other office sometime in the future.

Mrs. Walker 'phoned Saturday to ask if I would receive two gentlemen of color with cameras on Sunday afternoon, --three gentleman, in fact, and all employed by The Enterprise, and said to be gifted in the photographic field. Last Sunday when the Walkers had been here to take pictures of the African House murals, they did not have flash bulbs with them and so they wanted to have some re-takes made, probably for several reasons, not the least of which is to use one or another in connection with a booklet they usually print for Pilgrimage time to be given to Pilgrims.

I had my entire Sunday afternoon filled with



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appointments but said I would pilot the three gentlemen about on Sunday morning at 9 if they cared to come. Well, it turned out that two of them did care to come and the third never did show up because of the rigors of Saturday night. Charles Conant and Joe Metoyer turned out to be perfectly fitted for the mission and I was impressed by the ease and smoothness they carried out their assignment, including Ghana, the African House and one or two shots at Yucca. Charles Conant, a descendant of Grandpere Augustin's twin sister, Suzanne, seemed especially suited for doing the job and appreciating what he saw. While we were having a coke before they departed he remarked that before he arrived, he thought the place was bound to be good, having heard so much about it but that it had turned out to be ten times better than anything he had imagined. Joe Metoyer is light enough, I believe, to pass for a white person while Charles is dark enough to pass for a negro. For a long time I have been wishing I could track down a negro photographer to visit the local honkey-tonks some Saturday night and get some interior of typical plantation people on a Saturday night frolic and perhaps Charles will turn out to be just that person. I shall look into that matter shortly.

Dining across the fence this noon, I was enchanted to find Celeste's nephew, Dan Regard, present. He is a fine youth, presently completing his law school studies and I feel instinctively a lot of people in years to come are going to find him an excellent attorney.

Juanita B brought her father mother, two aunts from Shreveport and the husband of one of the aunts for a tour at 2:30 and Pat appeared occasionally while the business was in progress. The Barberousse contingent were very pleasant and obviously are good substantial people. None of them, however, had anticipated as much as Charles Conant, I think, and while they enjoyed seeing lots of object, probably took away very little by way of comprehending what it was all about.

James came for me at 4 and he, Kay and I sat beneath the cedars until dark and then supped and so back here by 10. All day I have been thinking of Lyme and holding the thought the day wasn't too much getting things back in order.....

11911

Monday, July 30th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continued hot with the thermometer still in the 90's after sundown this evening. The weather man can find no moisture impending in this area. The cotton is wilting and the pecan trees are beginning to shed leaves for want of water and I suppose the boll weevil is having a mighty hard go at life this summer.

It has always seemed such a paradox to me, -- boll weevil's inability to stand too much hot weather, for it would seem he was fashioned to thrive on cotton which requires a measure of warmth and yet neither the cotton nor the weevil can stand too much of a good thing and the boll weevil folds up even sooner than the cotton if the heat remains too constant for too extended a period.

I am always delighted when plantation folks get interested in trying their hands at growing flowers and vegetables and I am having a lot of fun bumping unexpectedly into evidences of Doreatha's doings in the gourd garden. Frequently in the morning she must find time to wander under the trellises and experiment with gourds before it's time for her to get back to her pots and pans. This year's crop consists of an unusual amount of long gourds, -- three to five feet in length and quite a few buxom ones suggesting a slightly flattened basketball. Doreatha knows where I keep some old sheets in the Ghana house, -- ones I tear up to suspend tomato plants from their bamboo stalk supports. She has torn off some good size lengths of this sheeting and wrapped them in a serpentine fashion about the young long gourds, tying the ends of the strips securely and sufficiently tight is the winding so that the gourds, as they expand in growth, suddenly present spiral grooves their entire length. Several



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visitors, unacquainted with gourds on the vine, have been puzzled by these seeming bandages and when the gourds have attained their full growth and the winding bandages are removed, they will present quite an arresting appearance. The same goes for the pumpkin-shaped ones, too, and thus the gourds offer fun for the amateur as the new shapes are fashioned and delight for the gourd experts when they have an opportunity this autumn to view the finished product.

I talked with Mrs. Walker today and recommended their best camera man of color be assigned to spend a Saturday night at the local honkey-tonk, snapping pictures while local citizens are in full swing. The appearance of a white photographer would cast a pall over such a gathering but if the Connant boy can engineer his camera properly, he ought to be able to get some splendid shots and I, for one, wouldn't know where to look for candid camera shots of a swing-out in a rural honkey-tonk that would possess the virtue of supreme unconsciousness on the part of those to reveal the nightway in this type of poor man's club. I don't know if I mentioned that Charles is the son of Florence Connant, nurse of Madam Regard during her last years, and she is the same Florence whom "Pa" Metoyer was courting at the same time he had the artist standing on her head. It would be just grand if the son of the rival could snap the artist in a swing out, it seems to me.

And now I must get busy and do some work, wondering at the same time how today turned out for the returned vacationist.....

11913

Tuesday, 31st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudless and hot

When casting about for some mint this afternoon to put in tonight's Tender Leaf, I bumped into an elegant specimen of a Ginger Lily, the first encountered this season and it enchanted me utterly. Perhaps you know the blossom. Perhaps I have bored you with endless descriptions of it too many times before, -- a flower that looks like a decoration The Student Prince might have worn in his cap, that Nicholas of Rumania did wear in his General's outfit, and precisely the type of thing that ponies in the circus were forever being tricked out in, -- a business sticking upright six or eight inches at the top of their heads. The shading in the Ginger Lily blossom is exquisite and subtle, ranging from delicate purple into lovely lemon yellows. It has no perfume. I shall never know why people who ought to know better are forever talking about Ginger lilies when what they have in mind is the butterfly lily. Surely there isn't anything about the plant or the flower that suggests the other, not only as to formation of leaf, stalk or blossom. One seldom sees the Ginger unless one parts the leaves of the plant and discovers it growing close of the base of the plant whereas the butterfly lily, -- in clusters rather than in a single flower, explodes only at the tip top of a three to six foot stalk.

I have heard Kay refer to the Ginger Lily when she was looking at and talking about a butterfly lily and I have never mentioned the error. But it happened this afternoon just as I was kneeling down to examine the beauty of the ginger, James came along



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and I made the most of the opportunity to point out the differences between these two types of plants, both of which chanced to be growing close together and I plucked the ginger and sent it in to town by him so that Kay might be enlightened and perhaps delighted all at the same time.

At coffee this morning, I was vaguely puzzled to learn from mine hostess when she stated that Mildred Cunningham's son, John, who is studying to be a priest in Alabama or some such place, wanted to make a round at Melrose and that, after some comparing of notes with Celeste, discovered his free time did not coincide with what Celeste knew to be my free time, as tomorrow morning Johnny has to be in Alexandria and so he arranged the people, -- I hadn't heard about them before, for whom he was engineering the visitation, would come without his guidance. What made the whole pitter-patter so odd was the identity of the people he wanted to introduce to Melrose, -- the sisters from the Convent of St. Augustin's Church at Melrose who would bring Sister Frances Jerome with them. As you know, Sister Frances Jerome most certainly knows her way around Melrose and how Johnny thought he had to sponsor a visitation, I cannot imagine.

At different times today I talked with Clara Genung and then with her daughter, Mrs. Walker. Mrs. Genung was happy because she is persuaded she isn't going to have to have her finger amputated while the daughter is unhappy because she knows her mama is bound to lose same. Mrs. Genung mentioned having seen Kay or talked with her a day or two ago and Kay mentioned she is flying to The Bluff this coming weekend. I am sure James knows nothing of this and it may or may not be in the cards.

The hour is 10:30 p.m., the thermometer stands at 85 and the Tender Leaf is calling.....

11915

Wednesday, August 1st, 1962.

Memorandum:

The heat continues although at 5 tonight we did have a dab of clouds and rumbling on high and a little shower that contributed nothing by way of adequate moisture to do any good to vegetation but the ensuing coolness will produce a heavy dew tonight that will provide more delight for the plants than did the drizzle.

It seemed just like old times and mighty welcome old times today when I found an air mail from Lyme awaiting me at the Post Office.

I was slap happy at 4:45 this afternoon when a secretary arrived and I thought I could commune with little Miss Lee. I had not figured on callers, however, and before the first letter could be opened, James appeared. As I knew not just how long he might stay, I dismissed the secretary, what with the rumble of thunder in the offing, and so impatiently I wait the morrow when I shall have an opportunity to take up today's delightful surprise.

James came not only on his own account but as Kay's agent, bearing a loaf of whole wheat bread she had baked and a slab of cheese to go with same while James, on his own behalf, presented me with what appears to be a fine melon which I shall sample at dawning. I have already had a nibble of the bread and it is just grand and I shall have a slice of same with a dab of cheese and a glass of Tender Leaf before folding up my beard an hour or so hence. I have some jolly round pear tomatoes cooling in the ice box, too, and I reckon I shall snitch one or two to go with the whole wheat and fromage, forgetting momentarily that I had better be sticking to my determination to reduce the belt line.

I heard one or two bits of Hatchitoches doings and



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I was impressed by same. It seems Aunt Willie had been fussing at Kay to come over to the Bluff on August 5th to stay for a while but that plan got side-tracked when Dr. Oberdyke called for his patient to return to him for treatment on the 10th or 12th. I must say I can readily enough see how James is provoked that attempts are being made with such frequency to get Kay to be winging her way toward the Cooper River.

I was interested in one point that came up during the visit to Natalie's house last night when James and Kay, joined by I. S. Willard whom Kay had invited to go along, --obviously to James' surprise, the ladies carrying travel gifts to Natalie. The ladies withdrew to a far end of the house to inspect the travel wardrobe, leaving James with the husband, in an expansive mood, and the three sons. In the course of the conversation, the eldest boy, currently going to Tulane, pointed out that his education was costing comparatively little, that is other than personal expenditures, since he is enjoying a six hundred dollar a seasons scholarship. One assumes this scholarship comes from the State but from whatever direction it stems, one cannot but contrast the affluence of the student's family and the poverty of many a would-be student who simply cannot go to college because of the absence of funds in the family cash box.

I had a call from the Enterprise today that resulted in a conversation which, when I hung up, turned out to be quite beyond my comprehension as to a point. The Enterprise advised that there was a man from the Shreveport Times present and would speak with me. The gentleman explained he reads my every column and mentioned his interest in primitives. What this constitutes, I know not, for he didn't want to buy one and explained the Times seems fearful of color. It was all very odd, --the reason for the conversation, I must say. And now on to some mail and on the morrow the letter from Lyme.....

11917

Thursday, August 2nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot and humid.

It was wonderful to be able to commune today with little Miss Lee. I found it so noble of her to have found time for correspondence in face of all the billions of things, bound to be demanding attention, in the thin slice of time between stepping foot once more on the family hearth stone and the opening gun, calling for resumption of commercial affairs.

It goes without saying I was sorry to learn of the loss of the little friends. I am holding the thought, however, that the solitary remaining little one may soon find a companion to provide him or her with the delights of friendship and at the same time add a glow of pleasure for their guardian angel. Like the Wendel sisters and their endless succession of Tobys, so I have always tried to follow a grandpa in quickly filling in the void left by the departing one. The loss of pets always leaves a wound but treating the disaster by substituting another pet does go far in helping to fill in the void. It is true, too, of course, that no substitute is ever identical with the original and yet the substitute, in turn, has a way of manifesting characteristics that soon endear themselves to us, providing elements of solace so subtle that we accept and love them almost without being conscious of so doing.

This noon I had luck in that I was just going out the back door, following dinner, as Sister was coming in the front. She did not see me as I headed toward Yucca and, as she



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was in a hurry to get on to Baton Rouge, I never did see her. She is currently mad at the General, it is said, and plans to stay in a motel while visiting her son and daughter-in-law for a day or two. She left word for me at the store that she was bringing me a white peacock on Wednesday. She said all she wanted was the eggs. From this one might conclude no end of things, -- the most obvious being that since it is a peacock she is bringing, -- obviously one, it must be a peahen, since she asks for the eggs. But what she proposes to do with the eggs of next Spring, I wouldn't know since the eggs will be no good unless the peahen has a peacock companion for, according to report, the white peahen doesn't mate with the colored ones. Shades of racial animosity! But perhaps the boxer will take care of the white bird before egg-laying time so that there will be no scramble over the eggs.

Pat called this afternoon to ask if I could give a tour to the District Attorney, George whatever, his wife and a couple out of New York. I could and did. On arriving, they announced they could linger only 20 minutes but they were here more than 60 minutes and were wringing their hands because they had to leave, asking if they might come back. George Anderson's guests, surprisingly enough, were especially impressed by the color of the stained glass in the chapel and I was asked if they might bring a New York artist down to observe same for it seems they liked the shade very much and the artist in New York is doing some so-called plastic glass and they would like to capture the exact tints if possible. That's the trouble with quicksand, you no sooner get out of one bog than you are caught in another. Smile.

The Walkers are cooking up a special Sunday evening repast in their garden on the margin of the river and invited me to partake. I declined and they said they would get Kay and James to work on me. Thus August gets under way and may there be snatches of rest for the traveler back home at Lyne.....

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Friday, August 3rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hundi, and hot.

The grapevine has just reported that next Wednesday's Shreveport visitor is going to pay a visit sooner than that, is coming on the morrow, I fact. A call from Baton Rouge reports some kind of an auto mix up in that city this evening and that an arrest and a 400 dollar fine was imposed and that Sister will be coming up here sometime tomorrow, thereby taking her off the hands of the S. G.'s and of her son and daughter-in-law's hands and how long she will be parking here, I wouldn't know. That's all the particulars the grapevine brought forth and I jot it down even though one would like to know a lot more including the length of the local visit.

The painters who are currently working off the house across the fence will, before leaving this bend of the river, do over the library and dining room of the big house and the living room and boudoir at Yucca. I reckon it will be a week or more before they arrive at this house and I shall welcome the opportunity it will afford so that I may take down the murals in the boudoir. I shall probably leave the panel at the head of my bed but shall take down the others as there are now, which was not true when the Yucca ones were installed, plenty of primitive murals to be seen in the African House and at Ghana. I am thinking of the last time little Miss Lee had her place done over and I know she will be able to understand how happy I shall be when the local job is finished and life can begin at some point along about the moment when the re-decoration began, -- for the re-decoration period never fails to constitute some sort of a gap in time, a hurly-burly while doing and one segment of the calendar one never seems to re-capture.



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As the hourglass for this day plays out, I find myself grateful to the sake of Ora and R. B. that Vernon is still alive and that we are able to get away early tomorrow morning without any thought of a funeral prior to their departure. don't reckon you will have an opportunity to see them as they pass through Lyme on their way out but perhaps you will on their way in a month hence. I am still so old fashioned about travel time that it continues to seem incredible to me to think of them as being in Hatchitoches this morning and Rome tonight.

The new family of baby guineas were still prospering tonight along about sunset when I gave them a post supper snack just before their bedtime. I know not if they made use of the little ladder I provided for them to mount the trees where, if not tonight, they will undoubtedly begin sleeping almost any time now. As their mama is gray I find it more difficult to keep track of her when the shadows begin settling down but their papa being white is more readily distinguished among the evening shades and I noted he was might busy at the base of the evergreen, hard by the Unicorn House, when bed time was approaching. It goes without saying I shall be up and abroad early on the morrow to see how the family fared during the night. Like the banties, so the guineas are early risers and I have no doubt they will be a-stir as soon as a streak of light in the East heralds a new day.

I learn that Mesdames Register and Walker have ganged up on the men folks and have planned the Sunday evening supper on the Walker garden regardless. They don't know it, but I shall be enchanted to find myself that far afield on Sunday evening, what with the presence of a guest at the big house on that date.

I gather from what my Thursday noon host reported that Aunt Willie was pulling at her niece to come to visit at The Bluff, as of August 5th but what with Dr. Oberdyke's treatments and other matters requiring Kay's attention in Louisiana, the latter isn't likely to fly off before the end of the current month at the earliest. I. S. Willard thinks frequent jaunts to The Bluff

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Sunday, August 5th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continued hot, over a hundred and not cooling off too much at night but I don't seem to mind and the laundry must be making money on the increased number of wearing togs coming its way.

On Saturday afternoon around 2, J. H. and the General appeared on my gallery. They discover what they have long ago known, --they have a problem and they wanted to talk about it.

I thought the General looked old and tired. It seems Sister had been arrested taken to jail in Baton Rouge and her license taken away. Her son, Lloyd, had put her out of his house and when he was advised she was in jail, he said that was a good place for her and that she had better spend the night there. The General, I gather, had bailed her out and had driven her up here as the first stage on her way home. The General took the bus back to Baton Rouge Saturday afternoon. I assume J. H. will drive Sister to Shreveport in her car on the morrow.

Everybody's weekend, of course, was put into a tail spin but we have had those before and shall probably have them again.

What I resented most was the confusion that frightened off secretaries so I didn't get an opportunity to go into any of my mail but I reckon I shall be having better luck on the morrow.

Kay and James remained in town Saturday night instead of spending the weekend, as is their custom, at the camp. In town their house is air conditioned. The camp isn't. But they



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came down this afternoon about 4 and picked me up and together we dropped by their house for a few minutes and thence on to the Walkers at 6. It was a group to my liking because of the presence of the family only, --the Walkers, their son, Mrs. Genung, Kay, James and I.. The shade from willow trees tempered the sinking sun as we sat on the terrace closest to the river where we had champagne and chit-chat while a couple of servants were arranging supper on the little dock out over the water where we be-took ourselves just after sundown. We dined on some excellent hot food and we topped things off with watermelon which we ate by the light of the new moon and it was all very pleasant.

Kay and Ursula had cooked up an arrangement whereby the Registers would pick me up to go to town and the Walkers bring me home which is just the way the thing worked out and I was sufficiently unsocial when we got to the bend of the river as not to invite them in for the hour was 10 and I assumed that they ought to be as anxious to get back home and into something like pajamas as was I to discover myself alone at Yucca sans pyjamas.

At dinner across the fence this noon, we were five, -- Celeste, J. H., Juanita A. Sister and Leston. Somehow in all the hubbub, J. H. had taken time out to drop in on Vernon Cloutier at the hospital and found him conscious and in good spirits and capable of talking animatedly. I am so thankful that Ora and R. B. were able to get away before Vernonsank any further. I had been all in favor of them sticking to their schedule regardless but it is pleasanter to know that everything was about as usual when the time came for them to take off. Don't you know they have been having a busy day this Sabbath in Rome. I am under the impression they are going to Naples will not afford the same air conditioning they are accustomed to in Williams Avenue.

And so I fold for tonight, holding the thought things are rocking along sedately in Lyme.....

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Monday, August 6th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The local thermometer stood at 108 today and we are promised more of the same stuff for Tuesday and Wednesday without any hint of cold fronts and resulting showers anywhere around. A 15 mile breeze helps humans to seem cooler but it certainly dries out the good earth already too dry. I hold the thought we may not have to wait until November 18th for a downpour, as we did in 1948.

Hubbub and visitations put a crimp in secretarial assistance both morning and night but the morrow is bound to be quieter and secretarial help available. Today's post was fairly heavy with a letter right on top from Lyme which I am impatient to get into. There appear to be several chit-chat notes, probably of pleasureable moment with no axes to grind. I notice one from Paris, --the boy friend, -- and one from Marshall, of all places. I wonder what could be sufficiently desired to impell letter writing from such directions. Well, we shall find out on the morrow.

Sister returned to Shreveport today, she herself being at the wheel. She hasn't mentioned the Baton Rouge fandango to anyone except J. H., and he, of course, tells everybody. As I understand it, the case comes up in Baton Rouge on Monday, the 13th. By then the daughter will be back from Mexico City where she has been attending summer school and perhaps she can do a bit of chauffeuring for her mama, should the latter's license still be withheld from the mama's possession. Mama usually can't make daughter do anything and accordingly there will probably be some scuffling between the two until daughter returns to school a month hence. It's wonderful how many people can be unpleasantly confused by one unimportant, no-account bag.



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The business of the exploding population remains with us. This morning on the front gallery I heard the unmistakable sounds of eggs being rolled along the top of the big old hand made armoire. I investigated and discovered one of the black banties pushing 8 eggs to and fro. I know not if she was making the racket to call my attention to her needs for a fine nest or if she was merely acting along usual lines to get her collection properly adjusted. I assume she isn't through laying as yet but obviously what she wanted was a nest. I accordingly fashioned a fine one for her out of a cardboard box and some shredded paper. She inclined toward protesting at my first gesture but was happy enough to take over as soon as the nest was installed atop the armoire and the eggs placed in the nest. Before September arrives, she will probably be calling on me to assist her in getting her new brood from the armoire down to the brick pavement of the gallery and a new generation, -- the third this summer from this particular bantie, will be under way again.

Little by little I am beginning to push things about in anticipation of the painters who will probably not reach Yucca for another couple of weeks. There is much that will have to be left till the last minute but there are other things that can be piled up in rooms other than the living room and boudoir and this is being undertaken slowly. Guess the biggest job will be to get the murals detached from the walls they cover in the boudoir. I am not going to put them back and accordingly shall have to do some casting about to find suitable storage space for them. As all of these are 4 feet wide and some of them 8 feet in length, it does take a bit of doings to find a resting place, suitable for them and likely to satisfy me.

It seems to me I can hear Tender Leaf tea calling from the direction of the ice box where crisp salad is awaiting my attention, too. With a big fan whizzing and general peace obtaining, a page ready to spin on the reading machine and all seems perfect for the close of a busy day.....

11925

Tuesday, August 7th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudless. Thermometer's high around 107 and tonight's low around 80 something. The whole country is said to be under a heat wave and I know just what is meant.

I was enchanted to be able to run through the mail leisurely this morning and so commune with little Miss Lee. I am so delighted to have such a splendid account of fair travel which has changed so mightily since last I was in touch with a plane 30 years ago.

I can well imagine how the vacation interim, now that it is over, seems so much like a slice from a all too short dream. How wonderful it is that this one can be remembered so distinctly and with so much pleasure.

As for your inability to contact Ora, I can readily understand the whole business. It goes without saying I shall be interested to learn how things turned at the family gathering and how you found Tillock, Himalaya and all. I suppose mellowness may have come with the passing of the years. Well can I imagine how eager some of those present must have been for news which only you could bring them. I think yours was a good deed done and it is pleasant to think of the reunion you and Ora will have three weeks hence.

The letter from the Rocket was inspired by a wish on her part for me to send a couple of Hunter canvases to Carl Carmer at Irving-on-Hudson, -- Octagon House. I shall pass along the letter shortly but want to skim through it again for the names of a couple of films she mentioned. I find the letter interesting in that it seems to convey the



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impression she has no intention of accepting the fact that she has thrown away friendships like one might toss an old garment into the rag bag, laboring under the illusion that whenever occasion suggests it would be advantageous, she can pull out the garment and put it on again for a moment if so desired. Poor Rocket, endowed with so much charm she cannot imagine it will not always exert the same magic on those who have once been classified as ragbag material.

The letter from the boy friend was something else again. Two secrets bravely attempted it but couldn't get anywhere.

Between 6 and 7 this evening, when I thought my day was finished, my phone rang. It was the artist to say that Mr. Pipes and wife were at her house and asked her to call me to see if it would be alright for them to come over. It would. I hurriedly put on some fresh garments and dashed out to the side gate to meet them, with a view to deflecting them from the small lake I had created along the usual path where lilies and things had been given a drink at eventide. hey didn't come and they didn't come and so I dashed back to ask the artist if she had told them I would receive them and she said she did and I dashed back and they, of course, had arrived in the mean time.

They both tried their hands at the boy friend's letter and I believe they got most of it and it appears to be merely a friendly communication having to do with a trip to Switzerland, the possibility of an appointment to Israel and so on. I shall have another go at it before passing it along.

While Kay and James were here, Celeste called to say La Dormon had just phoned to say she and her Alabama sister-in-law planned to come to Melrose tomorrow morning. Celeste told them I would be happy to receive them, Celeste being scheduled to be beautified in the morning before departing for a two or three day frolic down New Roads way. So many girl friends all about that one doesn't seem to mind so much that Inez Chaplin and all are currently en route to Las Vegas. And so I shall be Master of the House while the New Roads frolic is in progress and so the world turns. And now I must get busy with some mail as the hour advanceth.....

11927

Wednesday, August 8th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Still cloudless, still over a hundred by day and around ninety by night and I seem to be taking it all very nicely but find myself feeling sorry for the plants that have to stay in one place in the sun all the time.

Well, Celeste did indeed go to town to get beautified and I splashed through a bath before 9 and put on some fresh togs to receive Carrie and her Alabama sister-in-law. As we would be three, I made a couple of suggestions to the cook as to what by way of mid morning refreshments might be served, dropped the out-going mail at the Post Office and learned some people had already entered by the other gate to see me.

"It's the Dormons", I told myself as I quitted the Post Office and indeed it was the Dormons whom I discovered behind the big house, --all seven Dormons but no Carrie. There were the Alabama sister-in-law, her Florida son, his wife, a youth taller than his papa, two daughters sort of 12-ish and another girl, a cousin, in the same uncertain dozen year bracket. One should but seldom does learn never to be surprised when a pair of ladies turns out to be seven adults and children.

I guess the Dormons like crowds if they are Dormons and so I'm not worrying about Carrie's problems in eating and sleeping them. Sleeping anybody at Briarwood in 107 August would be beyond me and, were Carrie in my shoes, she would resent 7 people, --Dormons or non-Dormons, piling in on top of me for a deep summer visit. What puzzles me more than Carrie's ability to take it is the lack of imagination on the part of three mature people to engineer any vacation



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that imposes 7 people on any household. I made a sign to the cook that the service for the supposed three need not be stretched to cover eight and I proceeded with a tour. The posse were returning to Briarwood for dinner and thence expected to drive to Jackson, Miss., to have the air condition unit on their station wagon put into proper order and I was glad to stress this plan as a lame excuse for not holding them back from getting on their way. They explained Carrie hadn't been feeling well this morning and so hadn't come with them. I could understand that excuse perfectly. Had I been in her shoes, I should have been flattened out long before making last night's 'phone appointment for today's visitation.

This afternoon I got down all the murals in my boudoir and tonight the room looks much bigger, now that it is bereft of its wall decoration. The ginters of the walls can begin any time but I suppose it will be a week or two before they are ready.

This morning around quarter of 11, in pursuance of my promise to Kay last night, I 'phoned her to give her particulars about the Dormon visit and to advise her Carrie obviously would not be studying about calling on Kay in Pecan Park today. My 'phone call awakened Kay but she took it all heroically enough saying she would be able to go back to sleep without any trouble at all. This confirmed my impression that she hasn't enough to do and is escaping boredom by sleeping. I gather that among other things, hypochondria may be one of her problems. I phoned the house tonight about 9 to ask James for some advice on a Hunter matter. Kay answered and said she had called on Mrs. Genung this afternoon. In the midst of a sentence, she screamed incredibly and silence followed. Within a minute, surely not more than two, her normal voice came back on the wire. She exclaimed or explained that she had suddenly sighted a cricket in the house and that she had taken it for a spider but that James had appeared and re-assured her. I assume James probably thought the screams were as out of order as did I.

Well, so much for Dormons and Registers and I must confess there were other people, too, but of no more interest than the D.s and the R.s.....

11929

Thursday, August 9th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The heat continues and hot winds out of the southwest to make it seem just a little hotter. I keep hoses running around the clock but a prolonged heat seals the cells of the plants, preventing breathing, so that even with their feet in water, they incline toward beard folding.

Heat, however, doesn't discourage road running and I had my share of discontented ladies, pulling around and about the nation, too exhausted to know or care what they are seeing but unswervingly determined to keep right on going.

I understand the Registers are tending to remain indoors in their air conditioned house in Pecan Park. They ventured out at sundown, proceeding down the river, and catching up with me in the Chana garden about 7. They invited me to go over to the camp for a dab of ice cream and I accepted. Beer turned up in place of ice cream and I liked it although I could have relished the ice cream even more.

Kay was unhappy in that she thought none of us were sufficiently concerned about Communism and the danger from same in which the nation finds itself. She has been reading the Shreveport Times and is quite upset. James thought we ought to concern ourselves with less weighty matters since officials to whom power to act for us were probably the only ones who could do anything about policy. I thought James had a point. As for myself, beer or ice cream, I thought three people under the cedars could have more fun than wringing hands about what we three ought to do about Communism and I was happy to get back to the peace of Yucca.



CS611

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The Registers motor to Shreveport on the morrow to have another session with the bone specialist, Dr. Oberdyke. More than the services of the bone specialist is required, it seems to me but, fortunately, that falls into the classification None of my business.

This afternoon K A LB Alexandria TV called to ask for an afternoon appointment to get some local shots. I pointed out that probably air conditioned studio folk may not have heard that we are in a heat wave and that afternoons were impossible for out of door shots, what with vegetation slumping and all.

I am beginning to be reminded from day to day that harvest time cannot be too far in the distance. The best pear trees at Arenbourg are beginning to unload their fruit and I am turning it all over to Doreatha to manage as best she sees fit. The cardinals have just about divested the sunflowers of their seeds and the persimmons are swelling out impressively, making me wonder where they get the moisture that must be required to create such lovely specimens.

I shall be curious to see if the zinnias now being planted will ever do anything in this heat. Were I a zinnia just pushing up out of the ground and running into the intense heat they are encountering, I would through myself into reverse instinctively in full knowledge that I had come up, not through the outer crust of the good earth but in the burning center of the globe where hell fires supposedly are forever blazing.

And now for a dab of Tender Leaf, followed by ground to the various faucets to move this or that hose and thence to dreamland.....

CS611

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Friday, <sup>July</sup> 10th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The heat is intensified by scorching winds that help to evaporate perspiration but are pretty deadly for plant life. Leaves are turning brown and falling from many a pecan tree and at supper J. H. reported some expert as saying that it was doubtful if rain could do much for the trees at this late hour. If I recall correctly, it is the sugar manufacturing done by the sun on the leaves during the months of September and October that produce the sugar for next year's crop and what with the leaves currently falling before the middle of August, the prospects for a bumper crop in 1963 don't seem too promising.

One or two of the young persimmons set out last Spring look as though their leaves, still on the little trees, had been just fished out of the bottom of a tea pot in which, along with the tea, they had been brewed too long. In spite of such doings, they will probably survive but I feel sorry for them and the struggle they are having.

The TV agent appeared on schedule at 8:30 this morning and, for the second time this week, --the other being the Dorman visitation, I was distinctly surprised at the camera man who turned out to be a woman with three children, no less, a girl about 13, a boy about six and another boy about 2. I always felt very strongly that the Rocket was ill-advised when she took her teen aged nephew with her on location and I felt the same today.

The camera woman had never been here before and,



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leaving the offspring in the car, she accompanied me on a quick tour of the gardens that would offer some of the four major buildings of artistic and historical importance. I had a heap of things on my morning agenda and so I waved the lady back to her cameras and children and I got busy on typewriter and telephone. Half an hour later the mother and her brood appeared on my doorstep to say the job had been achieved and to say goodbye. What the shots can be like, --all exterior, I cannot imagine. The children, however, were wonderful and I was filled with regret I had not seen them before and found a way to spend some time with them. It is always refreshing and novel to discover manners in children and I thought the 13 year old girl quite sweet in her Hail and Farewell. I was quite unprepared, however, for the little six year old boy who spoke with remarkable distinctness and self possession and charm. Out of a clear blue sky he said:

"I want to thank you for letting us look around. I should like to come back again in a few years for I am going to become an artist and I shall want to paint some pictures of the houses and the geese and peacocks when I grow up."

Naturally I was fender-struck at such a measured statement from such a child.

I talked with Kay tonight, inquiring what sort of a trip she and James had had and how Dr. Oberdyke had found her physical condition. She said they had had a fine trip, hadn't minded the heat and that Dr. Oberdyke had said her improvement couldn't have been better and that by October, "on her return from the Bluff, she would be throwing away her crutch and using a cane only --if any. She said Dr. Oberdyke has an uncle, Dr. Oberdyke of Centenary, who speaks often of a man down this way named Leston whom, of all things, the Registers chance to know. And so we head into a weekend and may it be relaxing at Lyme.....

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Sunday, August 12th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continued hot. It was 106 in Shreveport during the afternoon but it has been over a hundred in these parts for so many days, precise figures don't seem to mean much, what with vegetation, animals and people so droopy.

I don't recall if I mentioned that James reported that on their trip to Shreveport, they noticed many fields of cotton being ploughed, the heat having been too much for the plants which had died before the bolls had formed or opened.

As for my weekend, I liked it because it was pretty mob quiet, giving me an opportunity to do little and enjoy the doing.

The usual Sunday evening beneath the cedars was on the agenda but that plan was altered in favor of an all quiet evening. Along about 3:30 this afternoon, I gave the peacocks, geese, ducks, guineas, bantams the cats and early supper and then hood off my long whiskers, splashed through a bath and, after donning some fresh regiment, found myself all ready to answer the door when James knocked. Instead of a tap at the door, I got a buzz on the phone, --James calling from town saying Kay wasn't feeling up to snuff and so it had been decided to remain in the cool of the air conditioned house in Poon Park. I thought the decision, although a little leisurely, a good one and I welcomed the opportunity to stay at home and fiddle around with a dozen minor projects that were ready for attention.



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I saw Celeste at dinner today. I guess she got back from her New Road frolic last night. I know not the names of those making up the party but I believe Mildred Cunningham, the latter's sister, and such like.

J. H. mentioned that he had stopped in at the hospital in town this morning with a view of calling on Vernon Cloutier but Beth was there and said there were to be no visitors today and that the lady doctor said Vernon would not be living out the week. Knowing Beth as we do, we may ass the lady doctor did say just that or never said anything of the kind. Surely Vernon is likely to pass out completely any moment but there is a possibility that he may live for an indefinite period.

I am glad I got an air mail off the Christian the other day giving him particulars about Ora being in Paris before the present month has panned out. If he is there when she is, I hope they find an opportunity to say Howdy for I think it would mean much to both of them.

In typical uncertainty, it was announced today that the pinaters would either complete their job across the fence on the morrow or would start in on Yucca or would attack the big house. As you may recall from your last adventure with the decorators, the job of getting ready for them is one of the major jobs involved. I don't care when they undertake Yucca or they will just tell me when giving me half a day to clear the decks I don't want to dump everything on of the place one day and then discover the next that it has been decided to do another house so that they will not get here for a couple of weeks. Living in Bedlam is one thing, if one must, but pushing one's self into Bedlam ahead of time is something else. Again Walker's 12 or 13 year old son and Mrs. Walker's mother, Clara Genung, both have their Birthdays on August 17th. Birthday gifts have been selected by the family for each celebrant, the boy receiving an airdale, the boy's grandmother a Pekinese. My short haired cats remind me that probably the dogs with their long hair will appreciate hair conditioned homes.....

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88811

Monday, August 13th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The thermometer reach 100 again and I didn't look at it again but I assume it went much higher.

I can't lay it on the heat that the mail sacks of the first class section failed to arrive. That happens when it is milder, too. And so, although the incoming post left everything to be desired, tomorrow will offer compensation by way of a double dip, no doubt.

As for domestic arrangements, I continue perched on an uncertain seat. At 5:30 this morning, August and Fugabou arrived, the latter high, both being sent to give me a hand in removing Grandpere from his position in the living room and so on. I waved them to the Ghana garden with hoes until the chief painter arrived at 8. At 8 that gentleman arrived with J. H. and the Yucca establishment was given a once over and J. H. asked me to accompany them to the big house to give it an appraisal, -- paint wise. One the way I waved in the direction of the big house and J. H., suddenly sentimental, remarked it was a good old house and that instead of merely painting the library and dining room, perhaps the whole place, inside and out, should be undertaken. I nodded approval. Then it turned out that there is still more work to be done across the fence and so the painters will get to neither house on this side of the barrier for a few days more. And so I sit in an establishment without wall decorations, save for Grandpere, and when the painting will begin, I haven't the slightest idea.

I went to Ghana to enlist the assistance of strong arms and found August laboring and Fugabou already passed out. When he came to, he went home where he remained. I can but marvel how the human frame can survive such alcoholic assaults in such unending constancy.



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Loreatha Williams, the girl of color who is on the river getting data for her paper on client and welfare Department relations came at 10:30 and remained until noon. I like her very much and nodded in assent when she asked if she might record our conversation about negro-mulatto relations. She reminded me that I had mentioned Helen Baldwin and again asked if she might call her when en route to San Antonio, she stops off at Waco to see her mother. I don't know how long Helen planned to be in the big road to Seattle and back but I assume she may have returned by now and Loreatha will go to Waco this weekend.

I walked with my guest to the front gate and on my return to Yucca I found the clerk here for his noonday port with me, and to my surprise, another gentleman named Register, bearing a fine jelly roll cake and baked by his wife. I asked him to break bread with us and he and after breaking bread, he returned here for an hour's chat. According to present plans, Kay will depart for the Bluff next Monday, -- a week from today. I believe her next appointment with the bone specialist is early October which ought to give her quite a vacation on the east coast. One gathers, after mature reflection, that something less than joy was realized by the patient when Dr. Oberdyke rejoiced at her remarkable progress. It is said a hypochondriac sometimes relishes poor health since, like a bandaged arm, ill health may provide a measure of attention the patient fears might not be forthcoming, were excellent health be evident. If so, a crutch becomes a symbol that would not be gladly thrown away and good wholesome food would be a robber that would steal concern on the part of one's associates. All this, of course, is an unfortunate mental labyrinth and, under the circumstances, one that isn't easy to find any way out.

Because of the heat, and the consequent premature opening of the cotton, picking got under way today. This will adversely effect the secretariat constancy adversely, no doubt but that will be nothing new and we shall manage it as satisfactory as before.....

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Tuesday, August 14th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continued sweltering.

Even as I had anticipated and hoped, today's in-coming post was as generously abundant as it had been thin to the vanishing point yesterday.

Right on the top was a package from Lyme -- how shall I say it, --the blue ribbon for the good old Royal. Picture my surprise and delight, however, when the box was opened, out flew "l'oiseau de Venice", --a combination I had never dreamed of and one that enchanted me all through. The crystal is just grand, so charming in its design and so beautiful in its ability to pick up all sorts of interesting lights when placed in the picture window in the same province that Egypt's Queen and other be-loved objects find themselves. How many a time when the new ribbon is in place will my gaze be wandering toward the windows as my fingers fly along the keyboard and my thoughts winging their way in the direction of little Miss Lee and my thoughts traveling backward and beyond to her interlude in Venice. No souvenir could have delighted me half so much and I rejoice as I contemplate the happy thoughts this little treasure will procure for me in times ahead as the gleam of its wonderful lights catch my eye and stimulate my thoughts.

Right under the package came the letters and the one from Lyme was right on top of the little stack. I can only marvel that time could be found to pen it and I strongly recommend, as in times gone by, that correspondence be shelved for a while until the impending pressure lessen a little. A post card occasionally to indicate how things turn should be the only type of communication until the rush subsides a little and little Miss Lee has a chance to catch her breath.



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Your reference to rain last week filled me with envy. If you discover you are getting too much, simply wave it away in this general direction and we shall all be enchanted to accept whatever can be conveniently spared. At supper tonight, J. H. remarked that the cotton didn't really need any since it had got beyond the stage where help from moisture could serve any purpose. The pecan trees are suffering mightily, too, but still the weather man scans the skies unable to find the suggestion of a cloud.

I am hoping the opportunity to see A. and M. and compare travel adventures turned out nicely. I assume you will have much to relate to Leston later as to how things turned at the Tilloch gathering..

It goes without saying I was delighted to have the clipping giving the correspondence between Lafayette and Washington concerning the keys to the Bastille. I have put it with some other treasures I want to re-read when an opportunity for more leisurely enjoyment comes to hand. I had never given the matter any thought before and so had never wondered about the actual destruction of the Bastille but from the Lafayette letter, one learns it was the Marquis himself who gave the order for its demolition.

Other letters in today's post included several requiring prompt answers, --particulars regarding primitives and so on. I shall enclose one from Caroline Dormon and a note handed me today from some bags hailing from Sister's direction and I shall hold back a few for addressed, such as from Steriling Cook, from whom I am always glad to hear.

The painters are still painting across the fence and I am still sitting here waiting for them to make an appearance. The country club claimed Celeste's attention which gave us J. H. for dinner and I always like that. And now to some mail but not before expressing gratitude again for all the nice things coming my way from Lyme to Venice and back again.....

04811

11939

Wednesday, August 15th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Continued clear and hot. I doubt if the thermometer reach 100 today but it is bound to have come mighty close. It was cooler during the early morning hours, however, which made sleeping wonderful and exerted a profound influence on me at 4:30 to ponder on whether I should be-stir myself or not. Virtue finally triumphed, not for Virtue's sake but merely because I had a flock of things on my morning agenda and I should never have tumbled out of bed had I argued with myself very long about the matter.

I am happy to report that our little crystal friend from Venice appears quite contented with his place in the picture window. At the same time, I must confess, too, that I am as pleased with his presence as he obviously is to be here. All day the changing lights he picks up and transmits are ever changing and invariably lovely. No bluebird ever symbolized so much happiness and, should you encounter little Miss Lee, I trust you will again convey my thanks to her.

It will come as no surprise to you to learn that the painters, of course, never did make it. Perhaps they will put in an appearance on the morrow. Perhaps not. The living room is a monument to the vacuum, being utterly void. I even dispensed with Grandpere's presence for the duration. He currently graces the front gallery but as he is facing the mud wall, he can see nobody and nobody can see him.

Two cards from Sister today asking me



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to pilot friends of hers about. One set she mentioned as coming on Wednesday or Thursday must be some of those who appeared on Tuesday. She says the others will come either on Friday or Saturday. Well, don't mind me. The fact that Yucca is undergoing a face-lifting relieves me of showing anyone this place and it will be nice when the same alibi applies to the big house. She doesn't know painters are in the offing. I think she will be unhappily surprised, should she come for a visit, to discover painters ranging over the big house and that will be fine, too.

Long distance just called but I could never comprehend the voice of the caller and suggested another attempt be made. Well, another attempt was made, --from Eunkey, Louisiana, of all places, but that was all I could get. I hope the line fails to function at all on the third effort for I am sure it is someone who wants to see me and all I want to see is something resembling a painter.

Well,, a clear call did come through and I was wrong in assuming I didn't want to receive it. It was from the TV artist, advising me that the program would be aired on the morrow at 5:30 and asking me if I would be kind enough to listen to the script that would be used. I listened, found it flattering to the place and to me and as I wasn't asked for any corrections, I volunteered none but I wondered what was biting the script writer when, in comparing Melrose to other sites of distinction, Williamsburg, Jamestown and so on, Gettysburg somehow got into the act. Battles have been fought at this bend of the river but never quite so world shaking as Gettysburg that I can remember.

And now to the mail and then to some Tender Leaf and thence to my downy couch.....

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SP011

Thursday, August 16th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot but not so sizzling as yesterday and a coolness that developed around midnight that made sleeping as between 12 and 5 delightful.

The moon has been so wonderfully bright these past few nights, the banties have proceeded on the theory that dawn was forever just around the corner and their crowing was gay whenever I awakened. Before calling it a day last night, I started counting the number of times one young rooster crowed at half minute intervals. I counted 17 and then fell asleep. The hour was 11:40 and his voice was as stirring as though day were about to unfold. I suppose there are six or eight young rooster roosting in the old magnolia about the big square pot in front of Yucca. These youngsters aren't fully grown and their voices strike different pitches, some of which are hilarious as they struggle to proclaim their maturity, convincing nobody including themselves as the voice cracks in mid flight and they finish off in an even more discordant tone.

I notice the paper today carried another reprint of a former CaneRiver Memo. There are a couple of unpublished columns in the office but I think they are reprinting because of some re-arrangement in the office staff and until things are better adjusted in the vacation section and so on, the columns, formerly setup, are more readily put into place. I assume new material will be forthcoming within another week or two.



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I happily report the arrival of the painters this morning. They pretty well finished up the living room today and the aroma of fresh paint is impressive. It will be more so tomorrow night, assuming they get to the boudoir within the ensuing 24 hours. I like the freshness of the walls in the living room and there hasn't been as much pushing and hauling as usual, it seems to me. Thanks to the dry weather, it is easy to use the galleries as parking place for the moveable furniture and I reckon the absence of stuff to fall over probably facilitates the slapping away of the three brushes, --professional artisans from town. I like the union length of working hours in the present instance, too, since they, --the painters, --do not put in an appearance until 8 in the morning and are gone by 4:30 in the afternoon, allowing me ample time in both morning and evening to navigate before the doings get under way.

We are in the midst of "So-say-shun" at St. Mathew's up the road a piece. With the nights so perfect, it must make it easy for those attending to get to and from the center of entertainment. I thought I might drop in for a little home made food one of these nights but what with one thing and another, I haven't ventured up that way as yet and I believe Saturday is the final go-round. Had Kay gone to The Bluff this week instead of next, I reckon James and I might have put in an appearance but I am just as happy to stay put while things are so by sizes and sevens during the present undertaking.....

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Aug.  
Friday, 17th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The thermometer continues around 100 but the coolness developing at night reminds one that summer is beginning to relax its grip a little.

Up a little before 4 this morning, I had the boudoir swept clean of furniture, except for the bed, armoire and grandfather clock, well before the painters arrived. Thanks to the heat and mild humidity, one coat of white paint had been slapped on before 11 o'clock and the second coat had been applied by 4 this afternoon. This enabled me to get a lot of stuff back into accustomed places, -- desk, chest of draws, wing chairs, fireplace things such as fender, andirons, copper utensils and so on and the big old bed, clock and so on back where they would be comfortable.

The turpentine aroma is still pretty strong and James called me a little after 9 tonight to recommend I consider sleeping in the big house. But I have a couple of fans going and all windows and doors open and I think I shall not mind.

James passed this way unannounced at 11:30 this morning and I was glad to accept his invitation to break bread with him at the camp. We sat on the gallery overlooking the river and he read me a couple of articles from recent New Yorker issues, --one about the Murphys, once of Mark Cross and mostly of Paris and Cap Antibes and I found it full of all kinds of information including the conviction long held that F. Scott Fitzgerald was a bag.

Kay and I. S. Willard were



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dining somewhere in town and I liked the quiet of the camp, the companionship and the excellence of the food, especially the shrimp cocktail.

Just as we started away, a car came racing into the camp, attended by the usual excitement that Sister always radiates. She and Dootsie Baby, back from Mexico, had brought down to Melrose a flock of women and Sister wanted me to give them a tour.

The ladies were as fascinated by what there was to see as a goat would be. It is easy to tour such people since all they want to do is climb through, over and around everything but aren't interested in anything they encounter and so one doesn't have to tire one's voice doing any talking. . . With three men slapping on paint in the boudoir, there was no excuse for anyone entering that room. I pushed the "goats" through the door of one gallery giving on the living room, in incredible disorder, and thought I was guiding them out on to the other gallery through the opposite door. But two of the bags detached themselves, darted through the boudoir and stuck their heads through the door giving into the bathroom, smearing off the fresh paint on the door so it had to be re-touched. What they hoped to discover other than the mountain of stuff piled up in there, I cannot imagine and I doubt if they did. The painters came to a full halt when they observed such carryings-on.

A. W. Britton, --Ann, --just called. Letters from Rome, Athens and Delphi indicate trip is going wonderfully. More on details later. Am bound to fold.....

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Sunday, August 19th, 1962.

Memorandum:

If one may believe the Weather Bureau, today's heat wasn't scheduled to go much above 104 but what with cloudless skies and a humidity of 87, it seemed hotter. I must say vegetation seems to be taking on a mighty puny appearance.

Saturday's post brought a letter from Delphi which sounds as though things are rocking along alright in that quarter of the globe. I know not if you or your associates save foreign stamps but I send along the envelope with the letter, just in case Greek stamps should be in the desiderata department.

I am happy to be able to report a quiet weekend in these parts. Kay called me from town last night to say Goodbye. She and James were to journey to Shreveport this afternoon and she planned to catch her plane at 8 on the morrow in the morning. An 8 o'clock plane must represent something of a struggle for sleepers who generally feel 10:30 or 11 a.m. is some time prior to dawn.

In times before this, I have thought the trips to the Bluff were unwise, especially in regard to a person establishing a residence in a new community where people who want to extend hospitality soon become frustrated when special menus must be taken into account if invitations to eat out are concerned and nobody knows when the prospective guest is in the Mississippi Valley or on the Atlantic seaboard.

Last February or whenever it was that the new residence was established, several people looked forward to



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little parties and dinners for the new arrivals. But right on top of the arrival came the departure for the Bluff and in any sort of community life, even as in business or any other line of endeavor, one must of necessity be on the job at reasonable hours if one expects to be a part of the doings. I think the journeys to the Bluff are in part due to Aunt Willie but at the same time, I think they are do in part to a desire on Kay's part to escape boredom and people who can't adjust themselves to usual social ways or think of anything to do to escape boredom would do better to journey around and about the country and thus kill time, probably with equal or greater ease, than remaining in one place.

And so the folks are in Shreveport tonight and when, at dinner across the fence today, I was asked if I was going to the camp to sup, I lied and said I was and was perfectly delighted to have an entire afternoon and evening to myself.

I chatted for a few minutes before dinner today with J. H. Hewas delighted to tell me a hocus-pokus story that he was quite right in believing I would like, too. It happened the other day that the overseer of cattle was riding a horse that stepped on something or other that cut an artery in the horse's foot. The cut was in such a place as to make treatment difficult and it was feared the animal would bleed to death. In the midst of things one of the Morin's came along in his car, observed what was up and asked why they hadn't communicated with Bernard, the old ex-blacksmith. Morin said Bernard could fix everything alright. J. H. told Morin to slide up the road and get the man. Morin disappeared in a cloud of dust and in a jiffy was back again, --alone. J. H. asked where Bernard was. Morin blandly replied that Bernard didn't have to appear in person and that, according to Bernard, the bleeding would have stopped before Morin got back. They glanced at the horse and, by Golly, the bleeding had stopped. Morin explained that when he himself was bleeding to death last winter, --internal difficulties, Bernard, after the surgeons had given up, exerted his magic from after and that was that. J. H. can't tell the story often enough and I love to hear him.....

11947

Monday, August 20th, 1962.

Memorandum:

100 degree readings continue but the heat seems to be drying the air so the humidity was down into the 20's and accordingly it wasn't so oppressive.

Before sun-up this morning when I stepped out on the front gallery, I was puzzled that the butterfly lily stalks should have taken on a sickly yellow color for they are always a deep green and stand higher than one's head. I have watered them liberally all season and felt the absence of moisture couldn't account for their attack of jaundice. Then I remembered scads of banties have played a round amidst the stalks and on looking a little closer, I discovered that the banties had scratched all the good earth away so that the roots weren't covered at all and how the plant should be able enough to turn any color was wonderful. Giant's Beard makes a frame around the semi-circular bed and will hold the water I am letting trickle on it all night to smoothout and settle the wheelbarrows of good earth already tossed in on the roots and in the morning I shall add a few more loads of good earth and so perhaps revival will be staged in the greenery section. If not, I shall simply level the whole business and turn to other beds of lilies scattered about the place.

The banana plants are showing the effects of the drought and their leaves are turning yellow, --not all the leaves on the single plant but one leaf here and another there while some have assumed russet red hues among the green ones and the variegation is quite charming.

James called tonight to say the trip to Shreveport had been pleasant enough and Kay had taken off by plane this morning at 8. He didn't come down to the camp but expressed the hope to make a round today. He said he hadn't appreciated how wonderfully vegetation was holding in the Cane River country until they approached



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Shreveport on Sunday afternoon where the brown of the fields suggested scorched earth every which way. Lots of timber

land is burning these days and a rather large acreage near Marshall went up in flames this afternoon according to tonight's radio news. Naturally everything is like tinder and one wonders one doesn't see more haze in the sky that the forest fires invariably produce.

The three painters and a couple of helpers went to work on the dining room of the big house today, scraping off former coats and getting read to apply a fresh covering on the morrow. Whether the morrow will bring forth Shreveport visitors or not remains to be seen. I may have mentioned the Baton Rouge frolic cost 135 dollars in a fine and a revocation of her license for 90 days, carrying the suspension into the 10th of November which will probably slow up automobile travel for a while although her daughter will be able to serve as chauffeur until L. S. U. starts in September.

I had forgotten about the 5:30 TV business over KALB, Alexandria, last Thursday until someone today mentioned having seen it, remarking how beautiful the shots of the local gardens and buildings turned out. Although the text had been read to me over long distance, I had not realized until today's report came to hand that when speaking of Yucca, it was described as the home "of the incomparable Lestan". Imagine. It seems there were shots of Cane River that were excellent. Buildings in Natchitoches also figured in the piece. I know not if people figured in any of the doings but I am quite sure I didn't since I was tangled up in a dozen doings at the time the local shots were being made.

My feathered grandchildren all seem to be thriving. What with no r and scanty dews, the guineas still number the same as on the day of the hatching. Guineas can't stand much dampness during the first few weeks of their existence and no batch of them ever had a better break than this year's offspring. And so things turn and so I must fold.....

11949

Tuesday, August 21st, 1962.

emorandum:

The thermometer continues revolving around the 100 mark. Some clouds did appear toward evening and it is said there was a sprinkle from a half mile up the road to a half mile below but the water hoses in this area lacked any excuse for continuing their good work. In town I believe there was a shower tonight but an attempt to communicate with Pecan Park came to naught, what with 'phone wires apparently crossed somewhere producing an unceasing racket like Chinese firecrackers sputtering away in droves.

James appeared at 11 this morning and I asked him to stay for dinner which he did, remaining until a little after 1 o'clock when he had to get busy with some helpers pushing things about ahead of the painters in the big house. He didn't have anything in particular to report.

At supper time, however, Doreatha told me that on reaching the camp this morning, James had found somebody had driven into the camp, deposited a barrel not far from the water hydrant and, on departing had not turned off the faucet completely, so that water was pretty much all around the place. I don't remember where the faucets are at the camp but there is bound to be one somewhere near the gate since Doreatha mentioned some time back that James had told her to use it whenever they needed water, now that most cisterns in the parish are empty as a result of the drought. Naturally James had assumed some of Doreatha's folks had left the water on but Doreatha was as surprised to learn about it as James to discover it. Why the person invading the place should have brought a barrel, and left it there, I cannot imagine.



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Tonight between 6:30 and 7:30, I ran through a variety of emotions that included elements making me laugh and making me provoked. Earlier I had flooded the bassecour section of Low Paul and Louella habitation. "When I went to feed them, I passed on through to feed the pheasants in the Unicorn House beyond. Stepping gingerly to avoid the puddles and slime, I slipped and succeeded in getting myself beautifully plastered in the smelly mess. Hastening home to catch a special program on the radio, I divested myself of raiment, jumped into the tub and jumped out to wring out the garments I had tossed into a bucket, and then, remembering the program I simply had to get must already be in progress, I dashed madly into the boudoir and stuck my head into the radio to catch, by sheer concentration, the broadcast coming through so faint it was almost inaudible. Vaguely, in the midst of things, I sensed somebody was in the room, and glancing away from the radio, discovered one of the overseer there, he obviously having entered without knocking. That's the trouble with hill billies, their lack of common manners. He said J. H. had sent some pilgrims who were by the big pot. I told him to go and tell them I would be with them in a minute. And so, donning some garments, I greeted them, wondering why J. H. should send people at such an hour. The overseer must have told J. H. I was approaching the bath for in a few minutes J. H. appeared to apologize and I told him we were all making fine progress. After all, my radio program had been knocked out and I might just as well give the visitors out of Washington a thorough go-round. It was dark before I had finished with them. They were Johnsons from Bethesda, Maryland and I cannot imagine why they should have attempted crashing a plantation after sundown or why J. H. should have sent them in, escorted by the overseer.

After all this trivia, I am about to invade the ice box for a nice crisp salad,--mostly tomato, belle pepper, onion and hard boiled egg ingredients, and a bumper of Tender Leaf.....

11951

Wednesday, August 22nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Our hot weather continues.

didn't see my 9 o'clock coffee companion this morning. She was in town, probably doing last minute chores in preparation for tomorrow's party when she entertains at bridge for a couple of Juanita A.'s girl friends, over from Beaumont. Yesterday mine hostess had remarked that Juanita A. wanted her girl friends while in Louisiana to make a Melrose tour. She told Juanita A. she would have to take it up with me as she was busy enough getting ready for 2 o'clock on Wednesday for the bridge game to open. She suggested to me that I contact Juanita A. to make an appointment. You would have thought at least a European trip was involved. And so I called Juanita A. this morning. The connection was exceedingly poor but I gathered that Juanita A. was planning to see Celeste this afternoon and, as she explained, she would make arrangements with her about the go-round. I told her I thought that would be fine and that was that.

Eleanor Lee, daughter of Clothilde and Lester Hughes, called me this afternoon to see when she might come down to pick up gourds for something going on at the college. We agreed on Friday afternoon. A Chamber of Commerce in behalf of some Miss Lazarus sought a visitation but it was declined. So many people,--late summer vacationists, I reckon, seem to be seeking a session these days.

Yesterday I remarked to J. H. that whenever he found himself in my neighborhood, he ought to drop in and see Yucca's new paint job. He passed this way this morning and found it pretty. I find it an interesting comment on the Henry way of thinking that while the livingroom and boudoir may have a few coat of paint,--the rooms inspected by Pilgrims,--my bathroom which hasn't been touched in years with a paint brush, cannot be included. It's like the telephone on my desk. It was installed at the insistence of the wife so that she could always reach me by wire but



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my name does not appear in the directory listing. Found  
wise, penny foolish.

From all the above fulminating and picaresque-ish blustering,  
I have no doubt succeeded in giving the impression I am out  
of sorts which is quite the contrary to facts. To tell  
the truth, my whole summer has been one of unusual happiness,  
probably stemming from several factors, not the least of which  
has been my delight that little Miss Lee could have  
such a wonderful outing and the companionship of  
a kindred soul from whom her contact has been too long  
delayed. Frequently during recent weeks when  
the unusual heat made ducks and drakes of the hang garden,  
my gaiety of spirit has been such that the devastation wrought  
by rabbits and the weather has seemed very important  
and the beauty of the vegetation that excelled seemed more  
soul satisfying than the whole garden could have been,  
had it constantly reflected perfection in every plant. I assume  
gaiety and gloom are cycles operating alternately on most if not all  
human beings and the past season has been one of so much  
inner delight that I have kept telling myself right along  
to keep on putting the excess in the Bank of Morale so the  
gay deposits may be drawn on readily enough if and when the gloom  
cycle sets in. Possibly one advantage of old age is  
the way the heights and depths through which one flounders  
seem to get leveled into a less exaggerated  
graph so that one develops an ability to take  
everything with a measure of moderation and so find  
deeper delights and shallower depressions than one  
did in childhood when things that then seemed tremendously  
important gradually taper off to scant or no vital importance at all.

The blue bantle is again setting atop an armoire and I am  
impatient for her to bring forth her little ones, all of which  
I shall present to Robert Anthony, Breatha's brother, as a  
present for his new abode, --the place where Zelma used to live.....

11953

Thursday, August 23rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Hot. The Weather Bureau predicted a mild 95 but  
the local thermometer went to 100 which, seemingly,  
like an extra inch on a man's nose, does make a difference.

Today's post brought a grand letter from little  
Miss Lee. It was the finest summation of a European  
vacation ever to come my way. I can't hope to begin  
expressing either my thanks or my congratulations. It  
is a document I shall re-read over and over again and  
always with the same delight the initial perusal  
provided.

The whole manuscript was so beautifully arranged, the  
progression so delightful, the successive facts and  
impressions so delightfully set forth that the words carried  
me along as though I had been a companion, conveying to  
me the feeling that I had been participating in  
the expedition.

It would be impossible for me to single out any  
single instance delighting me most for the whole business  
was so wonderfully executed that it all radiated rays of  
enchantment. I must say, however, that nothing  
pleased me more than the pleasure expressed with Lake Como,  
long one of my favorite spots. I, too, should  
so much like to spend a season there, a prolonged season enabling  
one to absorb its unearthly charm and absorb the  
places around its shore where other personalities,  
long admired, going back over the centuries, who have  
devoted important segments of their existence to the  
locality. Since childhood I have longed to  
explore a castle in the empires which somehow appealed to  
me mightily in those tender years and I cannot think why,  
on reaching maturity, I never got around to do so, unless



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it was that, unlike the present, I knew no one in those years who would undoubtedly have been so enraptured with the whole neighborhood as was I.

It goes without saying I rejoice with little Miss Lee that her favorite aunt remains so spry and so gay. Well can I imagine what joy must have been hers to have had this reunion, --memories for both ladies providing shafts of sunshine down the years as one now and then glances backward to this wonderful summer.

It was at once amazing and hilarious the cake should have been encountered in such an unexpected place and I can well imagine how astonished both travelers must have been at the encounter. It seems to me I remember having heard something about James Farley a few years back beating the drum for cakes in Europe but I never heard anything more and so am still quite in the dark, save for this one remarkable instance, as to what if any inroads that famous beverage is making on the other side of the Atlantic.

While reading little Miss Lee's letter, I was sitting where I could catch glimpses of the lovely ciseau de Venice and somehow it seemed to glow with especial brilliance just at that point. The old familiar names such as Padua and Verona made me rejoice that they also emerged during the trip. It is so pleasant when reading to run across such names that vibrate the more because of personal contacts. It made me want to "do" all the hill towns in one unending Spring and I immediately found myself wondering if the column touching on Florence turned out to be any good. I suppose it may appear in the enterprise within another week or so.  
interruption.....

I. S. Willard just called, ostensibly to say she planned to drop in on the morrow with Lester and Clotilde's daughter. She wanted to read me a note she had received from Natalie, penned from Lucerne on Sunday, asking her to share it with the Registers and me. It was a description of the scene from her balcony and it was charming. The sentence making the most profound impression on me, however, was: "Rome, Athens, Delphi, Vienna and I have loved every moment of the trip".....

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Friday, August 24th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Another sunny one hundred degrees today. The Shore report Station threatens a bitter 92 for the morrow. I hope. A cold front is now reported on a Fort Worth-Little Rock line and is said to be moving its high winds and thunder storms south-eastward. Amounts of rain up to one half inch. Several inches would be pleasant to contemplate but nothing of the sort is suggested. So often, especially in winter, the Canadian cold fronts have a way of bouncing along southward as far as Fort Worth and then sliding off in the direction of Tennessee, Alabama and so on. We don't need any high winds but a fall from 100 to 92 would help and even though moisture will not be much, even the dab of a half inch would be a gesture in the right direction.

In anticipation of a need for the gourds at the college, I rounded up a flock of stuff this morning, --dolls, swan, candle holders and Heaven knows what all. At the last minute and for no known reason, I polished off a flock of big and little gourds and tossed them into a big old wicker basket and that was that.

I. S. Willard and Eleanor Hughes Lee put in an appearance this afternoon, I. S. Willard bearing cottage cheese which I love and La Lee presenting me with a little piece of pound cake.

La Lee examined some printed material on gourds she thought she could use and we moseyed over to Ghana where all the plunder had been set out for her inspection so she might take all or select as much as she ought best for whatever she has in mind to use. In selecting the odds and ends gourds, I had chosen those which more or less duplicated those converted into the various toys and utensils thinking a sort of "Before and After" collection might be helpful to the dull witted who could the better imagine how the transformations might be made.

After taking a look at the whole assortment, La Lee



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decided that the basket with its gourds would be just what she wanted and nothing else. This saved me the trouble of packing up the dolls and what not and off the ladies sailed.

On returning to Yucca, I immediately made me a fine salad using the cottage cheese as a base, adding tomatoes from the garden, belle peppers, onion and so on and using no dressing save a dab of excellent vinetgar with appropriate dabs of salt, of course and two or three diced olives. It has been cooling in the icebox for the past five hours and will probably delight my palate when I have knocked off some mail and pour myself some Tender Leaf.

The mystery as to the person using the faucet at the camp has been easily solved. The guilty finger points at Doreatha's brother, Clyde. He has recently taken Fugabou's younger daughter to wife and they have built a little cabin not far from the Melrose bridge, not far but across the road on the south side opposite Doreatha's on the north. Clyde has helped James at the camp on occasion, accordingly knew where the faucets were situated. He had a barrel that had dried out from the prolonged heat and when it took it to fill it, the thing leaked and so he left it there. He ought to have had sense enough to turn off the faucet completely but didn't.

My only peacock grandchild is no more. She got the pip, a tongue business, simple enough to be removed generally. Dr. Doreatha was called in. I held the patient. The operation was a success but the patient died in my arms just as the surgery was completed. At that moment I heard a peep from atop the armoire. The peacock soul must have been re-born in a bantie and I packed up the nest, mama bantie and offspring and sent them off to Robert.....

11957

Sunday, August 26th, 1962.

Memorandum:

I could scarcely believe my ears when on Friday night, I suddenly heard the patter of rain on the broad surface of the banana leaves. I had about reached the conclusion that Nature had forgotten how to effect the miracle of absorbing moisture from the good earth and they once in the skies, dumping it back down across the landscape. We got a fine, slow dampening, --two and three tenth inches, all of which was greedily blotted up by the parched earth so that not a drop ran off into the ditches. Saturday remained cloudy and moist and today was notable for the stickiness of the sunshine and another shower during the late afternoon that added nine thenth of another inch of rain. It is said, --and I never understood the magic of the date, that pecan trees benefit vastly if they can get a deep summer drink on or before August 25th. What with the splendid soaking of Friday night, the 24th, the pecan trees may well count themselves on the lucky side.

I. S. Willard called Saturday to say that Eleanor Lee had lost a valuable paper and wondered if she might have left it on the hidet in front of the sofa in the living room. I investigated. She had. She needed it forthwith. I sent it to town.

I. S. Willard further sayeth that when the rain came on Friday night, the window in the Lee home, was open and one of the children went to close it to stave off the water from flooding the floor and the ice box next to the window. As the child reached up to pull down the window, a bolt of lightning struck the house, burning out the wiring in the ice box but harming the child not at all.

At dinner this noon across the fence, Celeste asked me if I had heard that Dan is in the Natchitoches hospital. There were several interruptions as she continued trying to relate particulars and she spoke rather vaguely. I gather, in the wake of much drinking, there was



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some kind of a brawl and the gentleman got beaten up.  
She said J. H. had been to town this morning and said the  
patient looked bad.

James came around 2 this afternoon and I welcomed the opportunity  
to run into town after we had had a pleasant hour under the cedars, getting  
caught up on a flock of clippings he had gathered. We dined  
on fried shrimp at the town house and were back by 6, following the  
shower that had cooled off the air wonderfully. We  
sat on the gallery above the river until after 8, watching  
the evening star sinking behind the dark line of the Montrose hills.

Saturday's post brought several letters, none of  
which I got around to explore Saturday and none of which I  
opened today, what with two weddings syphoning off the secretariat and so  
I shall look into them on the morrow. I notice one from  
the Rocket, one from Sterling Cook and so on. I  
suppose the Rocket's may be an acknowledgement of a copy  
of the invoice on the Carl Carmer stuff I forwarded to her or, perhaps,  
she wants something else. In view of the strained  
relations as between the Ramsey contingent and the Registers,  
I always feel correspondence should be confined exclusively  
to the secretariat.

A card from Thelma, showing a likeness of the  
President's home at Hyannisport, indicates she and John are  
"doing" the New England scene. Knowing their  
propensity for covering many a mile in what they describe as  
a rest and vacation, I shouldn't be surprised to  
hear from them from Quebec or Florida, so strong is the  
Mexican jumping bean influence in their road-running lives.

And now for a dab of mail and thence to my downy  
couch for I shall probably have some helpers on the  
morrow at dawning, what with the dampness ruling out all thought of  
cotton picking on the morrow.....

11959

Monday, August 27th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Pleasant sunshine and the thermometer at a  
cool 92.

At supper tonight, J. H. mentioned that C. Vernon Cloutier  
had died. I heard it reported later  
on the Natchitoches radio news. I take it the announcer is  
neither a Natchitoches citizen of long standing  
nor acquainted with local pronunciations. He  
mentioned the name Cloutier several times, saying it  
not in the French fashion as is locally practiced but with the r being  
indicated so that it sounded like Clouture to rhyme with  
future.

I suppose R. B. and Ora will get the news in London  
but it will not effect their plans, I suppose. The funeral  
will be held this Wednesday, August 29th. I am  
glad that all that hubbub will be over before Ora and R. B. get  
back for they will encounter enough of Madam Beaufort's  
performances in the months ahead so that they may well do without  
whatever fandango she may be putting on as between now and their arrival on  
the 4th.

A fresh batch of mail came by today's post to add to  
the undigested packet of Saturday and I raced through  
the things I thought might be the more pressing, saving the  
balance against great leisure, I hope,  
on the morrow, I hope. I am not  
certain of my plans for the morrow, however, as the letter  
from Carolyn speaks of bringing somebody or other this  
way, "either Monday or Tuesday" and since I saw  
nobody today, perhaps, and  
perhaps not, I may get a visitation on the morrow.



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Among the high-jinks going on in the cabins over the weekend was the rough house at Coke's. I forget Coke's real name. He is a mild mannered, rather delicate looking field hand in his late 20's perhaps. He has lived for six or eight years with a daughter of Murphy Brown, and it is said Mrs. Coke frequently beats up her husband with great vigor. I recall one week last winter when Coke was in bed for a week following such a pummeling. According to gossip, --and one must never take gossip without a grain of salt in the CaneRiver country-- Coke wrecked the family car the Cokes never could afford and this was a couple of weeks back. It is gossiped further that Mrs. Coke took her cotton picking money last year and invested it in a cow to provide more milk for the family which, aside from the grown-ups, includes six or eight children. Be that as it may, Coke is said to have sold the cow without telling his wife which, it is further said, made the wife unhappy. By this weekend, things had reached quite a pitch in the Coke cabin and it is said Mrs. Coke started after her husband to give him a whipping but the husband slowed her up by cutting her arm from elbow to hand. Eighteen stitches were required to close the wound and ice packs are required for a while to hold down the swelling. The Cokes once had an ice box but the children have long since put that out of commission. The doctors couldn't say if Mrs. Coke will ever be able to use her hand. I recall a recent figure by the psychiatrists declaring 8 out of 10 people are wacky. It appears to me the figure is too low and that Mr. and Mrs. Coke are among the ninety nine and fourty four one hundredths going around in circles.

I was pleasantly surprised today when I was greeted on the rent galle by a little old black bantie hen I had forgotten, -- with 8 or 10 offspring just out of the shells. I slapped them into a box, sending them to town by a friend for his child who

11961

Tuesday, August 28th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, humid the thermometer at 96.

As between 5 this morning and 9 tonight, the day turned out to be brimming over with people and things.

Sister blew in just before noon bearing a female white peacock. In the midst of the flurry, she made it clear that the bird was a very expensive present to me but that she wanted all the eggs it would produce. As local peacocks be-get only four eggs a year, laid usually in late April or early May, she shouldn't be burdened too much with rounding up what she wants. Since I know nothing about the care of peacocks, she immediately began giving instructions as to how the new one should be handled and the usual excitement attending any and all of her visits was in full swing. I am happy to report she returned to Shreveport during the afternoon.

Interestingly enough, she came by herself, driving her own car. Asked by J. H. how this was, she explained that after the Court had ordered her license taken up for 90 days, the police, after 20 days interim, had not as yet come to her house to get the license or car plates, and so she was keeping right on driving.

She had plantation folks flying around in all directions, as is her habit, and I cancelled my appointment with a secretary, knowing perfectly well I would never get anywhere while such a tornado was in progress.

Earlier in the day, one of the painters came over from the big house, asking me if he might borrow my sea clamps. "My What" I asked, never having heard of a sea clamp. As you may or may not know, a sea clamp is the type of thing used to hold furniture, when newly glued, into place and J. H. told the painter his mother had used them to hold tight quilting frames and I had them. I guess J. H. merely wanted to



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get the painters off his back. In any event, I don't have any sea clamps.

Tomorrow at 9 a.m. they bury the mother of Bill Joss at St. Augustin's and at 10 o'clock they bury C. Vernon Cloutier from the Cathedral in town. J. H. and Celeste will undoubtedly attend both services. There is a mild to-do in the Parish as a result of people sending money for masses to the Cathedral and never hear anything about either the receipt of the money or the saying of the Mass. The priest in charge hasn't been notifying anyone and when asked about this or that person's Mass simply remarks that the Mass in question has already been said. Several members of the congregation and some of different religious connections have started making such a racket about what appears to be a simple pocketing of the money that I suppose a correction will be made forthwith.

Carolyn who by letter had threatened to try to pick me up this morning and whisk me to town to dine with her and her two young men, called between 6:30 and 7 tonight, -- a little late for noon dinner. She asked if she might bring the young men down for a first dark tour, followed by a more thorough one on the morrow. She came but the outline of the buildings were almost completely concealed by the darkness. I suggested they skip another Cane River round on the morrow but rather head right out from Clarence where they are spending the night, going eastward to Natchez to give the youths a glimpse of that area and then proceed southward to St. Francisville and thus cover the major plantation districts prior to the end of the week when the boys have to go back to school.

Carolyn was full of plans about doing a prospectus for a book about little river of Louisiana. I told her I thought that was just fine. She said Carl Carmer would introduce her to likely publishers. I didn't whisper the name of Hastings House. In speaking of Mr. Hodges, she said he is thinner than thin, listless without any enthusiasms and so on. Our session ended a little before 9, withal pleasant but probably she was semi-conscious that the void created during two years. And now I must knock off a couple of notes and then call it a day. Forgot to say James called for a couple of hours during the afternoon and seems fine.....

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Wednesday, August 29th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy, humidity at 100 percent, following a rain last night that began around 11:30 and sprinkled gently until nearly noon. A little over 2 inches of water fell.

Carmen called me around 10 this morning to say that Carolyn and her two young men had been to call on her at her Red Cross office. She said Carolyn reported that when they reached their Clarence motel after 10 last night, they were advised their reservation had been transferred to somebody else. They found another motel in the Kampti neighborhood. She said Carolyn had intended to invite Carmen to breakfast but was delayed in getting back to Natchitoches. In the rain they, -- Carolyn and associates had "done" the American cemetery and some Cane River plantation homes. I can't imagine deciphering tombstones in the rain but there is no accounting for taste.

That Carolyn and party should have dropped in on me during the morning would not have surprised me since obviously they had rejected my suggestion they breeze on to Natchez, Mississippi. I had mentioned last evening that if they didn't head East, I should be glad to see them during the morning but that I should be busy-busy all afternoon.

My secretary, unable to assist me yesterday because of Sister's presence, arrived promptly at 1 to delve into quite an assortment of mail. As he started the first letter, Carolyn tapped at my door, having brought her associates with her, of course. Like I. S. Willard, she apparently pays no attention to what one says regarding appointments. I dismissed the secretary and repeated last night's tour. They remained until 2:30, heading south for Alexandria and some food since they hadn't had any lunch. And that, I guess, is that.



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James called at 3 this afternoon, reporting he had been in town at 10:30 when Vernon's funeral was in progress. He said the streets were block off around the church and assumed quite a few people attended. Somebody else,-- Carmen, possibly, reported that the Cloutier boy did not attend. It is said he has a great resentment toward his mother and I reckon it was felt wiser not to risk one of his tantrums in public. Madam Beaufort had forbidden Vernon's mother entry into Vernon's hospital room recently and Vernon's mama did not attend. She is delicate in health and the weather was rainy and unpleasant.

Mrs. Walker called this mornin' to read me a letter from Bill Dodd, one time Lieutenant Governor and some kind of a Baton Rouge figure now. I know not if the paper will print it in the Letters to the Editor or not but if so, it will probably appear in Thursday's issue. It was a letter of congratulation to the Walkers on their newspaper and had a few sentences to say about CaneRiver Memo which Mr. Dodd apparantly reads.

A card from Ora carried a likeness of Chartres Cathedral and, in the penned message, I believe, says something about Fontainebleau but that was when Carolyn knocked and so I know no more. I am naturally delighted if she got to see both of those places and, I hope, got in a day at Versailles.

I think I shall write Mrs. Walker tonight, suggesting by a proposed letter that she should copy and have on Ora's desk when Ora gets home, asking her to do an article for the newspaper under some such title as "August in Europe" or some such. I think both you and I would relish reading it.....

11965

11965

Thursday, August 30th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and humid with a little over half an inch of rain during the afternoon. Twice of late the Weather Bureau has announced an absence of rain at a particular time and stated the humidity to be at 100 percent. This reminded me of a couple of times of late when the ureau has stated that it had been raining for a couple of hour but the humidity was only 79 or s me such. I seem to be so old fashioned in having assumed that humidity was 100 percent siply because it was pouring.

I chanced to be near the front gate at 5:30 this afternoon when I heard the sounds of young goats bleetiting. My agents reported shortly thereafter that Dan Henry had accouple of them in his car, brought down here to get them established in the home of some local family after having had them in town for a while. People can think of the funniest things.

I almost forgot today was the birthday of Huey P. Long. I heard no reference to it on the radio but Carmen mentioned the fact on the 'phone, saying State employees, entitled to this Thursday as a holiday, had been given Friday to boot, and, as they don't work Saturday or Sunday and as Labor Day comes at the beginning of the week, that day is batched into the general rest period so that State employees are getting quite a break from their labors, if any. It seems to me I remember having been in New Orleans in 1938 on Huey Long's birthday, a fact that made an impression on me at the time since until that moment, I had never known the Kingfish ever had a natal day. --let alone that Louisiana politicians had made it a holiday.

I haven't seen my 9 o'clock coffee partner in



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several days, what with much doings in town in the mornings this week. I did see James today when he dropped in around 1 o'clock for an hour's visit. He seemed fine. He mentioned having talked with Kay who says she is exercising her hip in the Bluff pool. I gather this may be an excuse for her lingering on in that quarter, --the Bluff, not the pool. As they, --the Registers, are members of the Country Club adjacent to Hatchitoches, which has a pool and a Hot Well to town the road is paved, having much pools and as they have a camp on a certain Cane River having a dock and much water, I suppose you might say the different places to exercise a hip are ample all around.

Both Hatchitoches papers must have come off the press late last night for we received neither in today's post. I talked a few minutes with Mrs. Walker tonight but the connection was so poor, neither of us could do better than catch about ever 3rd or 4th word. She said she did not print the Dodd letter this week. She liked the idea of asking Ora to do a Memoir of her trip and I hope Ora can find the time to do it.

Tomorrow morning I am going to leave the basse-cour gate open so Low Paul, Louella colored peacock and the new white one may step out into the gardens as they please. I have a feeling the white one feels quite at home now and will be content to remain May there be a pleasant weekend impending at Lyme.....

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Friday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1962.

Memorandum:

Humid to the 100 mark with a noon rain that measured about an inch and three quarters. It was designed expressly for this bend of the river, I guess, since it didn't so much as sprinkle in ermuda.

Somebody or other, perhaps Fugabou or one of the painters or somebody found 12 or 15 just Out-of-the-shell quail, perhaps in the gourd or the bulb garden. The little old things are about the size of a penny. I am especially delighted to know the quail have taken up residence here again for I thought that between the years of dusting of cotton and the explosion of Shreveport hunters, they had vanished from the local scene. If I recall correctly, quail beget two families of offspring a season and so I assume there may well have been another batch of them earlier this summer and perhaps I shall see off some of them this winter when I put out food for them around the moon dial.

About 4 o'clock this afternoon Sister and daughter appeared unannounced. I know not how long they plan to linger.

At dawning I opened the enclosure where the peacock of longer residence, the newly arrived one and Low Paul and Louella have been sharing each other's company for a couple of days. It took persuasion to entice the white one outside the enclosure, an effort that succeeded about 9:30 after the other peacock and the geese had long since sought greener pastures. It seems the white new-comer is simply fascinated by the silver pheasant and spends all day at the wire netting separating them. I wonder if the silver pheasant is a hypnotist since I remember one of the colored peacocks spent days gazing through the wire mesh at the same pheasant early last spring when house there. Once out of the enclosure, the white peacock was free to range with the colored ones but, to my disappointment, nothing of the sort happened. On the contrary, she simply slipped around to the other side, the outer



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the other peacocks in sampling bugs and grass and so forget for a while the fascination the pheasant exerts.

Today's post brought a card, cancelled from Chartres and bearing a likeness of the Cathedral, this one being the third this season coming from that quarter. There was Ora's, one beforeget from whom the one earlier came, and today's was from Dr. Tally.. I suppose lots of people go to Chartres but, oddly enough, this is the first time I can remember receiving cards from there. Possibly one or another of the senders had been reminded of the place by something read in TheEnterprise. Sometime this winter I should perhaps do a column under some such title as Versailles and Fountainebleau. This wouldn't be done with a viewto getting Cane River Memo readers to visit these places since everybody goes there but rather to point up the differences between these two best known chateaux on the tourist list. In the old days, people were forever asking me which place I liked better. To me that was like asking me which I liked better, a pair of comfortable old bedroom slippers or a slab of chocolate pie ice cream of butterfly lilies. Somehow there never seemed to be any comparison since each is in a different category. As I see them, Versailles is a portrait of a man and an epic in contrast to Fountainebleau which is a panorama of people and centuries. One thing is certain, if I do knock off such a column there will be plenty of bored readers.

I talked with James tonight. He seemed to be his usual happy self. He had just received a bunch of Marlboro Books and those shipments never fail to provide enchantment for him. He heard from Kay last night. She reports fine progress and plans to return home in the middle of this coming week, just after the Labor Day rush. I think she likes these back and forth journeys which, probably, is just another form of road running.....

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Sunday, September 2nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair, warm and humid.

Thus far the Labor Day weekend locally has turned out peacefully enough. I hold the thought the same may be said for the situation in and about Lyme.

On their arrival Friday after noon from Shreveport, mother and daughter let it be known they would remain through Monday. Twenty-four hours later, however, after having dined Saturday noon at Magnolia, they announced they were returning home and everybody relaxed. Daughter finds Cane River too humid to permit her to sleep. I knew not if it be more humid here than in Shreveport or Baton Rouge but I suppose it is about the same in all three places at the present time although it is quite possible the drying quid ities inherent in air conditioning to which she is accustomed may make considerable difference.

At coffee on Saturday morning, Celeste mentioned having been at Beaufort on Friday and that Beth had read to her guests a letter from R.B., penned in London, on receipt of news of Vernon's death. I assume the Williamses arrived in New York on Saturday morning and it goes without saying I shall be interested to learn how things panned out at that port of call. I can readily imagine little Miss Lee may have been away but I'm sure both ladies were thinking of each other a good part of the time.

The far the weekend has been quiet enough in this area. I have heard firecrackers exploding in some camp or other across the river or perhaps gun shots for city folks coming to the country often seem impelled to make quite a racket which students of the mind may explain. As for myself, I don't care and the explosions are sufficiently removed as to worry me not at all. I suppose I may expect a few road runners on the morrow but I shall be able to manage them easily enough. Hampton Carver wants to bring his girl friend down on Tuesday and that will be pleasant



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enough. He plans to leave to begin his law studies at Harvard within a week or so. I know not if he plans to stop off in Manhattan to visit the John Snells or David Snells when proceeding to New England.

James passed this way this afternoon about 3 and we left immediately for the camp to enjoy the pleasant breeze on the terrace beneath the cedars and enjoy a beer before driving to town where we supped, returning here until 9.

I don't recall if I mentioned putting up a barrier in the pheasant section so the pheasants and the peacocks could go their even ways without being distracted by each other. Perhaps I shall knock off a column on the matter. Be that as it may, the new member of the peacock flock seems to be very contented and it would appear things are settled for a while in that quarter.

This morning's radio news out of New York had something to say about fire crosses having been burned in several north Louisiana Parishes during the night, the illuminations under the auspices of hooded Ku Klux Klan members. I find it quite heartening to know the K. K. K. has thus unmistakably aligned itself with the other racial bigots like Leander Perez. Certainly the K. K. K. is so thoroughly discredited as an organization that its association with any group ought to give the latter a black eye if not already possessed of one. Perez keeps on singing the same song, --the Vatican is conspiring with the Kremlin to put over Communism in the United States which makes one wonder just how cock-eyed a person can get and still keep out of an insane asylum. Well, so much for the moment but more on the morrow.....

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11971

Monday, September 3rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Sunny all day, except for a brief shower between 3 and 4 this afternoon that set everything to steaming just as though it hadn't been damp-damp all the time.

I talked with Ann this morning. I understood her to say she talked with her papa and mama on Friday night when they reached New York from London. There were people swirling around at the time Ann called and so I didn't get any particulars.

I liked this year's Labor Day, peaceful as it has been. The freedom from road runners enabled me to get a lot of work done and I felt that satisfaction that always seems implicit in well ordered doings by painters, field hands lending a hand in the gardens to put things into some kind of shape, lawn mowers going full tilt and general activity without the hoop-la of people getting into each other's hair and intruders to gum up the works.

I liked the way the day started although I am still puzzled to understand one performance by the guineas. They were waiting for me at the side gate between Yucca and the African House where the gray mama with her three gray offspring were standing on an old pecan stump a foot above ground level. The papa guinea, white, was standing along side and their cheery good morning at dawning seemed to strike just the right note. When I spoke to them they all responded by



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jumping into line and following me to the African House where I frequently feed them. But they surprised me by manifesting no sign of interest in breakfast. I talked with them a minute or two. They came and pecked indifferently at the cracked corn, simply as a gesture in good manners but obviously not at all interested in the fare set out for them. I went on to the Unicorn House to present Lou Paul and Louella and the pheasants with their breakfast and the guineas followed hard on my heels. From the Unicorn House I went on through the gourd garden and thence to the Guana garden to see how the peacocks were doing, only to find them still in bed. The guineas kept close to my heels. Then I turned back to Yucca, the guineas still in close pursuit. Perhaps they thought that I, rather than the corn, was good enough to eat. Smile. What was really biting them, I cannot imagine but whatever it was couldn't have been physical since they were hungry as bears by 10 o'clock.

Late this afternoon I gathered the okra and took it to the kitchen where Bereatha was preparing supper. I asked her how soon she would be taping the supper bell and she said in about five minutes, allowing me time to wash up a bit. But as I started out of the kitchen, J. H. was just coming in and surprisingly enough declared:

"Your daughter just fell out and somebody called for you to come home right away."

Both Bereatha and I thought the statement was addressed to me but it turned out it was for her.

Mrs. Walker just called, asking about a column. I told her she had one for next week. She said she needed one for the following week. I told her I would put one in the mail in the morning. And so I had better get busy and think up something to write about as the night advanceth.....

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Tuesday, September 4th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Warm and humid with only a light sprinkle of rain sandwiched in between sunshine, the dampness coming shortly afternoon and insufficient to discourage cotton pickers, painters or gardeners.

It was such a delightful surprise to find a dandy note from little Miss Lee in today's post. Having secretarial assistance at noon, it afforded me no end of pleasure to contemplate the balance of the afternoon on the general subject of her breaking bread with Natalie. How much it must have meant to Natalie while in Paris to know she had such a kind friend who could handle Eastern passage, should such have required substitutes, and I am glad for all concerned that this was unnecessary. It was pleasant between 4 and 6 to think that the contact had been effected and that by then Natalie and spouse would be wending their way toward the Pelican State. I suppose they may be home by now, -- 10 o'clock but I doubt if I shall hear from them for a day or two, not only because Natalie must have a mountain of things confronting her and then, too, the teen agers on this party wire have a unusual amount of social business to transact these nights and it is difficult for anyone to get a call through.

Your reference to little Miss Lee's hurly-burly existence leads me to guess that nobody but little Miss Lee can possibly appreciate the pressures. Lestan, however, feels he can sympathize genuinely and has prayed me to say to you that if you chance to have any influence at all with little Miss Lee, you will do everything in your power to persuade her not to attempt



STELL

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personal correspondence until things have quieted down a little. He is mindful that this may no come before the holidays but whenever that date may be, it is hoped that energies will be conserved at every corner and that an occasional post card will suffice to indicate how things turn.

Hampton Carver and his girl friend came down to see me this afternoon. They are sweet children, in that age between high school and college that is so tender when it is at its best, as it is in their case. They bore a three decker chocolate cake baked by Hampton's grandmother for me which I thought touching and heart-warming. Hampton says David Snell has taken a house somewhere in the metropolitan area and that Ada Jack is in New York at the moment. Hampton leaves for Harvard within the next week or end days and college, of course, will introduce a new phase in his personality and career. There is a tinge of sadness about such brevity in the high school student's existence but growth in life, of course and change not only inevitable but desirable in spite of the fact that on occasion we have all wished that for a little while at least the world might stand still.

Last night before folding up, I knocked off a column under some such title as, --of all things, --The Feathered Fascinator. The morning was such a busy one that I found myself relieved when I had got the thing into the mail. Just before Hampton arrived, I discovered I had neglected to include the first page of the article in the envelope and so I got him to deliver the missing page for me when he returned to town.

I was glad Doreatha's daughter seems to be getting along alright. She took her to the hospital where it was said she was merely suffering from indigestion. Let us hope so. It seems to me on three previous occasions the girl has had digestive problems that sooner or later turned out to be in three instances baby daughters without papas, -- verily a digestive ailment that most certainly should merit concern.

James came after supper and sat until dark and I found the crescent moon so pretty as I walked through the gardens with him to his car.....

STELL

11975

Wednesday, September 5th, 1962.

Memorandum:

According to my radio, the rain kept the ball players off the diamond in Lyme today. Locally it sprinkled in the morning and afternoon on the cotton pickers but didn't dissolve them. A "cold front" is said to be moving eastward on a line from Lake Superior to deep in the heart of Texas. We are promised a low of 68 tonight. Winter, like other phenomena, so often knocks first, retires and only later come back with determination.

I haven't heard from the European travelers and so know not as to their whereabouts but assume they are home. The teen agers on the local party wire have had a great deal of business to transact all evening and it is possible attempts have been made to reach me. In view of all the mountain of things confronting the lady on her return, however, I can well imagine 'phone calls may not be the order of the day until some of the "must stuff" is disposed of.

Doreatha came to see me this morning to ask my advice about her daughter whose indigestion, following her trip to the hospital the other night, shows little improvement. I suggested she try the lady doctor, having reached no satisfactory point with the two gentlemen doctors already consulted, the lady doctor being notable for her powers of diagnosis. Doreatha thought that a good idea, especially, I think, as Doreatha has consulted the lady doctor on occasion and so knows her. I called the office in her behalf and tomorrow afternoon was agreed upon as a time of mutual convenience for the examination, and Doreatha returned to the kitchen obviously relieved. At supper tonight she told me she had taken her daughter this afternoon to see yet another gentleman doctor and he had diagnosed the trouble as ulcer of the stomach. -- Done, I



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should imagine, in young folks in their 20's. Eventually Doreatha's daughter will probably get around to the lady doctor but one doesn't wait to rush into the experts without proper deliberation. James will like that when I tell him.

I talked with Clara Genung today. She continues optimistic about her mending fingers on which her daughter continues to treat. La Genung says it is eight weeks since the accident took place. She has lost the nail of the middle finger but blandly opines she will grow another. I suppose, in view of the severity of the wound, and the patient 77 years, the healing is probably going along pretty well.

Fugabou seems to require more than 8 weeks to pull himself back into shape. As a matter of fact, he displays no intention of wanting to get off the bottle and one wonders how he finds the means to round up so many of them. The grapevine reports that J. H. told him the other day that while he can continue occupying his present cabin, he ought to feel free to move elsewhere since there is no work here for him. I must say he provoked me this season by ruining so many rows in the Ghana garden by staggering around when high as a kite. Now that it is ginning time and Fugabou should be working at that job, his drunken condition is more serious since one false move where so much machinery is going full tilt, might spell out all sorts of major and minor disasters. His brother-in-law, Pal, is out of jail, following his lifting of the cotton sacks, valued at several dollars, and trying to exchange them at the honkey-tonk for thirty five cents for a drink, and as Pal is said to be picking cotton on the place, perhaps that is where the Fugabou libations are coming from.

Mrs. Walker just called to say that tomorrow's Enterprise will carry pictures of the firecross, the roadside posted near same and, unrelated though it be, the Bill Dodd letter, all of which are pretty hilarious in their respective ways. Dodd calling Cane River Memo "Big League" somewhat startles the Cane River Memo scribe who seldom dreams in baseball nomenclature.....

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11977

Thursday, September 6th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Sunny and humid all day. A torrential rain began at 7 and I suppose an inch or two has fallen thus far.

The Enterprise goes forward at the same time this letter does. You will note on its front page a picture of a fire cross appears and along side it a reproduction of the Ku Klux Klan manifesto and cartoon that, as the article explains covering the story, that the Klan suspended by fish hooks on an adjoining stake. The Times printed the same picture of the cross burning but, in mentioning the manifesto, did not quote directly from it.

With the above in mind, you will readily imagine my astonishment at supper tonight when J. H. announced that Mrs. Walker is getting herself into trouble by her editorial in today's paper. He asked me if I had read the paper and I said I had and thought her editorial excellent. He looked at me thunderstruck and asked if I didn't think a lot of Jewish people would object to her saying the things she did right there on the front page. I told him there was no editorial on the front page by Mrs. Walker. He said I was mistaken and went on to quote various phrases, all of which, of course, were from the Klan manifesto. I held to my position, he to his and when he left the table he said he was going right out to the store and check on the matter but he was quite sure he was right and that the front page piece adjoining the picture was Mrs. Walker's editorial.

Now, if a man with as keen a mind as J. H. takes a Klan manifesto for an editorial by Mrs. Walker, what can be expected from the majority of Enterprise readers who are, in large majority, less observant, than J. H. It is quite possibly inadequately identified, --the manifesto, --



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but even so, it would certainly be an insult to anyone to have any person suppose such apiece could possibly be written by a literate individual. Verily, it is difficult to anticipate what a reader's reaction is ever going to be to anything appearing in print.

James dropped in around 2:30 this afternoon to drive me down to Andy's house, --the cabin where the artist lived when little Miss Lee was down this way. He had brought some kind of a package and I thought it kind of him to remember Andy. Naturally I didn't ask him what was in his and he didn't inquire about mine. We found Andy in bed but looking fine. He goes to Alexandria tomorrow to have X-rays made and his back bandaged, I suppose. The Charity Hospital will undoubtedly do a thorough job and I hope he will be back tomorrow night as he doesn't want to leave his brother alone in the house over night as the brother, Albert, hasn't much sense. I assume Andy's difficulty is a strained tendon and it will probably take quite a while for it to get mended.

The enclosures speak for themselves. Mildred, as you know, is Mrs. Peyton Cunningham, sister-in-law of Charles. The Rocket surprised me by writing so soon -- or at all. She must be in the money at the moment and perhaps easy money for her begets an impulse to remember former associates. Perhaps the opposite is true and a barren barrel is bringing back the human strain. When she was here I asked as a matter of courtesy concerning the good health of the Lost Word. She is so busy she hasn't had time to acknowledge my greetings of the past two Christmases but of course I didn't breathe a word about that to the Rocket.

I just had a 'phone call, --Celeste saying J. H. wanted to speak with me. He said he wanted to back down on the position he had taken at supper and although I had been right about the matter, he felt that lots of people read the paper no more carefully than he and would carry away the same erroneous impression. Well, Lord what will be next.....

11979

Friday, September 7th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Two and a half inches of rain last night. Cloudy today with about an inch more this evening and the promise for a rainy weekend and I don't mind at all.

This afternoon about 2, I heard voices on the front gallery and I be-took myself there from the opposite side of the house. Love Freeman, a Natchitoches character and old pal of Dan's, was there. I have perhaps seen him 3 times in my life which is precisely three times too many. He is one of those nothing individuals, pretty much of a drunkard who lives by what source of revenue nobody knows or cares who is received by nobody and who invariably greets me and everybody else he encounters as long lost buddies.

He presented the lady accompanying him, -- Mary Inades or whatever and married to a man named Hodges, -- the same couple who purchased Rosalyn Aswell's home. She is on the plump side, quite pleasant, sort of 60-ish and seemingly more of a New Orleans product than the Shreveport where she was born or the Florida where she has lived. She was bearing one of her I. E. U. cook books, already autographed for me. She also had a calico cook book of mine she wanted me to autograph. I gave her a Melrose Plantation one to boot.

We got started off bravely when she opined in what appeared to be a truly desire to be friendly by saying she had so longed to meet the man who she "just knew was such a character". My response was that I had, on my part, heard of her as quite a character and it was fitting that the two should meet.

As Mr. Freeman, before bringing her to Yucca, had already taken her through the big house amidst painters, upstairs and down and the African House without painters, upstairs and down, I was gratefully relieved of providing a tour. They asked if they might see the inside of Yucca. They might. I did not ask them to sit down. I was happy when they said they



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must hurry along. I did what I could to assist them in that line of endeavor. She was most gracious in asking me to come to her home and suggested, when I said I seldom got up that way, that I telephone her. I made the most of the opening and assured her I should never think of calling on anyone without communicating with them in advance. In parting, she spoke of Lyle whom she had known, she said, and opined I looked so much like Franz Blum, "didn't I think so". I said I had never seen Franz Blum but often I felt like him. "But he is dead!" she exclaimed in an excited voice and in a subdued tone I answered: "Yes, I know....."

Well, so much for Mary Landes and I look forward with infinite pleasure never to see her again.

If Kay's plane arrived at Shreveport at 3 this afternoon, it is possible the Registers are home. Even as was the case last weekend, so is the case this weekend, --the telephone completely out of order. There are one or two in-coming calls I should welcome such as from Natalie but I am in no great rush to deflect my attention from a flock of little odds and ends calling for attention and if I don't get them done, I certainly can't put the blame on Southern Bell.

It's always good hearing from Helen. I thought she might find Miss Williams interesting but apparently she didn't extend the contact beyond the telephone stage which is quite alright although I am a little disappointed. I was certainly surprised she got no closer than Yellowstone on her intended trip to Seattle but then things are always comparative and I again laugh in my beard when I think of the rejoicing among the scientists when it is announced their rocket will come within nine thousand miles of Venus which, in the same breath, is a lot nearer than I should care to come.

John Henry Wenk is here for the night, after having spent the last several months at Madison, Wisconsin in the college there. He enters the New Orleans L. S. U. senior year this coming semester. How the coming generation does get about.....

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82811

Sunday, September 9th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Our daily showers continue. It's difficult to keep envelopes unstuck and matches that will respond to coazing.

Perhaps it is humidity that is making ducks and drakes of Southern Bell service. I was astonished when communications through that organization resumed on Saturday evening. It was James who called. I believe he and Kay and expected to drive down from Shreveport Friday, following the arrival of her plane around 3 o'clock. But they didn't return to Natchitoches because it was late when the plane arrived. After leaving Charleston, the plane had stopped at Augusta, Georgia, where it had difficulty getting off the ground and the flight wasn't resumed for a couple of hours. That brought Kay into Atlanta where she was to change sometime after her Shreveport plane had departed. This meant another four hours wait and it was midnight in Shreveport before her luggage on still another plane, arrived. She was already in bed on Saturday night at home when James called. He said they hoped to see me Sunday night at the camp. About 4 this afternoon, however, he called, saying Kay was still awfully tired and accordingly they were all remaining in Pecan Park which I thought an excellent idea.

This morning Natalie called, giving me an account of highlights of her trip. She especially mentioned little Miss Lee, how enchanted Natalie's husband had been with her, how sweet little Miss Lee had been to them, the flowers, the theatre tickets and everything. It does one's soul good to feel the warmth Natalie has for little Miss Lee.

Natalie asked me to save next Sunday afternoon for her as she hopes to venture down here to relate details. In our conversation which was cut off by faulty connection, she did not mention Rome or Gondolfo and naturally I want to hear all about those places as they impressed her. She touched on recent only as regarded the parents of the local students had entertained them. Vienna was mentioned only by implication when she expressed her delight with Schoenbrunn and I want more details there and on Vienna generally as she saw it. I got the impression



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she was disappointed in Versailles although she didn't say so. For some reason, known best to her and her husband, I suppose, they did not, as I had strongly urged, take an electric train out there. Instead, they went on a conducted binge, seeing only the big palace and a glimpse at the gardens without ever going on to the Grand Trianon, the Petit or the Hameau. She said reconstruction was going on in the big palace. I gather it was on the same jaunt they made Maintenon, Chartres and so on which must have been quite a day.

In spite of the conducted Versailles et al doings, they seemed to have scant difficulty in traveling to St. Germain en-laye by train alone and although they of course didn't know it, going to Versailles was simple as pie and much easier than St. Germain-en-laye. Be that as it may, it is possible you already have more particulars concerning all the above than do I, and following next Sunday's session, perhaps I shall be able to pass along some more.

I talked with Mr. Walker on the 'phone last evening and with Mrs. Walker this morning, or perhaps this noon, since she reported having seen John and Thelma at church and John allowed as how he always believed in printing the news but felt it had taken a heap of courage to get the Klan business in Thursday edition. Everyone in town is talking about that issue and oddly enough many people get the impression the Enterprise is favoring Klan-ism. A gent named Landry whom I know not rushed into the Enterprise office on Friday, bubbling over with enthusiasm over Thursday's paper, declaring that up until Thursday he had been led to believe the Walkers were in favor of segregation but now he realized he was wrong and that they had indeed been on the "right" side all the time. I assume the aforesaid Landry, like many another, was persuaded that any paper that would reproduce the manifesto must automatically be on the side of the racial bigots. I find it a wonderful example of people reading into a paper what they want to find there. One or two subscriptions have been cancelled as a result of the Thursday issue and one or two have been added. Whether anyone transacting such business knew what he was doing or not, I wouldn't know.

Next week the Louisiana Press Association, --perhaps the women's division, meets in Lafayette or some such place. Mrs. Walker is supposed to accept the Presidency but she declines and wants Margaret Dixon to take the office but the latter wants her to and so the girls contend.....

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Monday, September 10th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Humid. The sun shone all morning and at 1 o'clock the cotton pickers ventured into the cotton patch but within half an hour it was raining, --no great volume but just enough to knock everybody out of the fields.

And speaking of cotton, I must remark on how the gathering of the crop has proceeded this year. Nearly all the planters from town to and including Magnolia, have decided to lean heavily on mechanical pickers this year. In view of the investment a mechanical contraption calls for, it has been the custom of late for Texas owners and operators of mechanical pickers to come with their machines into this area, concentrating first on one plantation, then on the next and so on. Cotton plants must be free of leaves if the machine works properly. The ground must be dry since the machine is heavy and cannot go forward along the row if it is damp.

In view of the heat, the cotton bolls opened about a month early this year, long before the Texas operators had dreamed of coming to Louisiana. J. H. put the cotton pickers on human design into the fields and found he had a bountiful labor supply, stemming from other plantations up and down the river where nobody was to pick before the mechanical worker had had its go at things. One consequence of all this and in spite of the rains, is the fact that the local plantation has the major part of its crop harvested by hand in contrast to many of the other plantations which haven't even picked a boll as yet. Then, too, hand picked cotton is a better grade than the mechanically picked staple since hand picking does not damage, that is tear the fiber and always brings a higher price than the other. What a pity a man having such excellent judgement in making money has none at all in taking care of himself.

Last Saturday was open season for hunting pigeons. Everybody with a gun goes into the fields where the birds are feeding and bags what he can, many a sportsman having deep freezes, putting



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game on ice against Christmas when the eating of  
pigeon, like the dining on black eyed peas at New Years,  
is considered good luck -- for the eaters if not the eaten.

It rained on Satu day morning or early afternoon and so  
nobody started early because pigeons don't fly in the rain. But it cleared  
in the afternoon and I have no doubt there was much banging about  
the Parish. Mr. Walker and 12 or 13 year old son were among the  
hunters and got two. One of my younger secretaries went by himself  
and got the same amount.

More interested as I am than in pigeons w is whether somebody  
mistook the big peacock for a white pigeon and brought him down.  
He didn't appear for breakfast on Sunday morning and  
I haven't seen him since. Possibly the dog went pigeon hunting.  
In any event, I am glad there is another peacock to attend to the peachen of color  
and the white one.

Two or three times over the years I have received a lecture on squandering  
money and once more in the same place, --over the coffee  
cups at 9 this morning, I received another. I remembered  
that mine hostess had once presented her mama with some sort of a  
little old package containing whatever a priest  
needs when calling at the home of a communicant to  
give commune. By its nature, it could  
readily be considered as a gift to a whole family. I thought  
it would be just the thing to give the Williamses for  
Christmas but, naturally, I didn't mention their name when  
I mentioned to mine hostess that I was in the market for one of the  
little items and would she tell me whence she obtained hers.  
She said she got hers wholesale and that they were too expensive for  
me to buy, in fact, as she recalled, they were priced  
and five or six dollars and how was I getting along with  
Pilgrimage preparations and was I going to invite one or another of  
her friends as hostesses in some of the buildings as in the past.  
And so, as the expression has it; that was that.

Well, I didn't take long through the store to learn the name of  
the house carrying the desired item and that, if I may repeat myself,  
was that.

It seems to me the Guernsey lilies are at least a couple of  
weeks in advance this year. Every rain makes more of them jump out  
of the ground so that the African House greenswards, front and back, are aflame a  
the moment along their borders. They will be gone before  
Pilgrimage, of course but the dark green of their leaves coming up  
as soon as they cease flowering will be pretty enough.....

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Tuesday, September 11th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Sort of 90-ish in heat and humidity but,  
remarkable to relate, no rain today.

I was enchanted to discover a pretty post card from  
little Miss Lee in today's post, inspired by one of  
my favorite breathing places in Lyme. I know the  
place mentioned where the grandifora was discovered but  
I don't remember it although it must have been there  
when last I passed that way. One of these days I shall be receiving  
a card giving impressions of the returned travelers. I  
have no doubt you may have found Natalie's husband a  
little on the 5 cent cigar side. Curiously enough a couple  
of drinks usually turns him into a pre-college boy. Frankly  
I hold the thought Natalie may someday make another Grand Tour  
either by herself or with some congenial soul like little  
Miss Lee and I think she would discover  
more soul satisfying, inspirational moments  
than she possibly could with her companion on the first whiz around.

Today's post also brought the folders covering this  
year's Pilgrimage. I haven't read one of them  
as yet and so assume it to be much like last year's.  
This, as all preceeding years in the folder section, was printed  
by Charles because Carmen takes care of  
publicity. The Enterprise hasn't even been  
invited to bid on the job. I imagine  
Mrs. Walker will probably out Pil rimage publicity to  
a fraction this year and I think she would be quite  
justified. Charles will also  
be given the Christmas Festival programs to print,  
I am sure. Carmen's jealousy of Mrs. Walker  
and the improvement of The Enterprise leads Carmen



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into the practice of lamentable short-comings. Just as unreasonable is Carmen's affection for me, it is said, for while she loves nothing better than to lay hold on anything, --and if she can't find anything, make up something to fling at The Enterprise and everyone connected with it except, of course, me. It is interesting to try figuring out such things if one likes to speculate on such matters and I do. My conclusion is that while Carmen likes me alright, at the same time she has a feeling that I am likely to add to her fame by one thing or another with which I am concerned and in which she has no finger. I shouldn't be at all surprised if that explains her courtesies to me, based primarily on the fact that it is probably at least 51 percent interest on her part in hoping to hear trumpets of her fame blown from this quarter. Well, she may keep right on listening. Liking or disliking may of course, be reasonable or unreasonable and to my way of thinking her dislike of the Enterprise and its staff and her liking for me are equally unreasonable.

I am enclosing a letter from Sterling Cook, together with its envelope. The letter itself is arresting in that its account of the wedding suggests that sometimes truth is indeed more remarkable than almost anyone could dream up for fiction. The reason I am sending the envelope is to give you some notion as to the type of thing James has been doing in recent months. The design on the back of the envelope cannot be compared with the beauty of the things James has brought into being merely by clipping from magazines and so arranging random slashes of paper together as to make remarkable pictures, --folk dancers, masques and so on. He places these on a canvas the same size as another canvas, both of which he gives to the artist who, in turn translates into oil paints the general feeling of the creation James has set forth and some of the results are really wonderful. Just throw away the Cook item as I do not want it back.....

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Wednesday, September 12th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair, humid and no rain.

I was perfectly delighted to find a letter from Lyme at the Post Office this morning.

I am so happy to have your news items as covered in the first page where an interruption took me away for a while and the secretary, probably assuming, and quite justifiably, that I had probably passed out, vanished. It goes without saying I am impatient to get on to the second and third pages.

It is good to know there was peace in Lyme over the weekend. One can readily imagine how pleasant it would have been all around, had the same condition obtained a week earlier.

I am especially impressed by the remarks concerning the Versailles visit which, oddly enough, seems to coincide with precisely the same notions as expressed in a recent memo from this vantage point. There will be other visits to Versailles and if only two or three make the visit, perhaps it will mean much more than did the initial go-round. At least there will be the unexplored sections of the two Trianons and the Hameau.. Of course there is always the possibility that people especially interested in a place tend to people it with familiar characters from other centuries and to give it an atmosphere which is never dreamed of by the uninitiated. For people like little Miss Lee and Lestan who vibrate normally enough wherever in the 17th, 18th or 20th century, such places are so familiar, whether visited before or not, that one feels right at home in such geographic and calendar settings. It all somehow reminds me of a young, hard boiled medical student which whom I was discussing Psychiatry. I had thrown out the statement that I thought intuition played a large factor in



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the true practice of Psychiatry. The budding graduate snorted at that and wanted to know what intuition was. He had heard of it alright but didn't believe it ever existed. One thing was certain, --he didn't have a y, and it is possible one needs a certain twist of interests to find so readily what some of us do and others never discover at all.

I talked with Mrs. Genung today, having called her to inquire how her fingers are progressing. She tells me they are mending slowly and that she is enchanted with a new doctor, a Dr. Plunkett in whom she has faith which is certainly all that is necessary. She said the Registers called on her last night and that she hadn't encountered such a discontented woman in a long time. Kay, in response to her inquiry about building, said she was going to erect a French Provincial house in the Parish right after the first of the year. So far as I know, there was no mention of which year and so I shall not be surprised if it is not the coming one. One fact in the case is that she is undoubtedly not up to par and possibly enjoys the status. It is quite possible the development of a property would increase her instability and I assume it is for that reason James looks with scant enthusiasm on her getting involved in building.

On the plantation front and at long last, J. H. got tired of Fugabou's unending spree and told him to look for a job elsewhere. Fugabou asked him if he would write him a recommendation and J. H. said he would if he would tell him what brands of wine or whiskey he insisted on using around the clock for months without number. Here we are at one of the busier times of the year and Fugabou hasn't so much as put in an appearance for weeks which is better than showing up drunk as he did so many weeks this winter and spring. Fortunately he thinks the plantation needs him but that he doesn't need it and that mix-up may help somewhat if he ever decides to go somewhere else, after having spent his entire 45 or 50 years here. And now I must take a turn under the full moon and thence to my downy couch.....

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Thursday, September 13th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and remarkably humid.

It was so wonderful to have the balance of the grand letter from Lyme to set my dry in just the proper delight of spirit. I am so glad you mentioned additional particulars about Como. I hold the thought you may be able to round up the book on the subject you mentioned. Sometime, should you ever chance to find yourself in the Public Library, it might be interesting to run through a catalogue on the Italian lakes. I have no reason for assuming anything about the subject but I feel instinctively there may well have been extremely interesting monographs compiled on Como and its environs. Somewhere, too far back in my mind to bring out into clarity, it seems to me I have turned through a volume written in the 1880's on the subject. I can't recall if the book was a compilation of data on all the lakes in German, Swiss and Italian valleys of that general area or if it was exclusively devoted to Lake Como. It seems to me in retrospect that I was trying to follow the travels of one or another Renaissance traveler, hoping to find references to the region in their diaries. As I recall, and it may well be that I cooked the whole thing up in my wishing, that the book devoted itself to various properties giving on the water and compiled brief abstracts of each property. Such a book would be so dry to the majority of readers that it would never have any sale but, for people of our turn of mind, it was a gem for endless reference. As you know, my contacts with people interested in such matters is limited but you may be sure I shall pay attention to anything coming my way and shall be in the 7th Heaven of delight if something comes up we may share together in our mutual enthusiasm on the subject.

Thanks for mentioning the missing May 28th issue of the Enterprise. I am sure I shall be able to obtain a copy within a few days without any difficulty. I shall put some in post for you.



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My day has been a busy one and withal quite pleasant. I was happy to learn the big peacock is in the land of the living, having flown across the river where, I believe, the Morain's propensity for saying things, have the bird housed in a chicken coop. I shall send a pickup truck over to get the bird on the morrow or possibly I shall go myself. If they had left the bird in the open, I think he would have flown back the same day, especially as the other peacocks have been calling him.

Father Calahan and Father McElroy came to see me this afternoon and I enjoyed a pleasant soci 1 hour with them although I did begrudge the time spent thus as I was clean the chapel and wanted to finish same before night descended. I didn't know until they told me that Father Calahan broke his arm a second time this Spring when visiting at Avery Island and Admiral and Mrs. Ringle did the patching on the broken arm until hospitalization could be effected. James came while the Reverend Fathers were here and it was all very pleasant chatting together.

I. S. Willard called. She decided to leave last weekend for Baton Rouge by train, driving over to Calreence and parking her car there, flagging down the train which stops only on signal and then proceeding south. On arriving, she phoned a railroad official, asking precisely when the train would arrive. He told her and reported it on time. Fearing her handkerchief wouldn't be adequate to wave as a signal, she opened her traveling bag, extracted a slip and then, foolishly, thought she would check on the train again. She called the same official and as he answered a roar burst upon the neighborhood of I. S. W.'s phone booth. It was the train rushing past at 70 miles an hour and kept on going, naturally. She travels to Virginia Beach next week and early in October goes on to Washington and New York, planning to get back here a day before she is expected to receive at Ghana on October 15th. The moon is lovely tonight and I think I shall take a tall glass and be-take myself to Ghana's bench with the two black cats for an hour of communion in spirit with you know whom.....

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Friday, September 14th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair. Temperature and humidity staggering around in the upper 90's.

I am perfectly delighted with all I have seen in the large envelope arriving by today's post. Unfortunately circumstances prevented me from turning to the mail until after dark so that I shall have to await the dawn's early light before absorbing the full measure of their excellence since artificial light somehow conceals some details which are perfectly clear in the smoother light of dawn. I am delighted to have the whole collection and several of my friends are going to find the silver pheasant of particular interest. The composition of the man with the bunch of bananas is bound to find a place where I can enjoy it at a glance a dozen times a day. The whole layout is so excellent and the subject matter so in tune with local plants and helpers, I shall not be the only one to find no end of pleasure in it and I have a feeling James will be trying to get the artist to try her hand at something of the sort one of these days..

The big peacock hasn't come home as yet but I reckon he will be making it one of these days. The grapevine reports that about 6 o'clock this morning, J. H. sent 7 or 8 boys across the river in a truck with instructions to locate the peacock and bring him back to me. Of course, J. H. knows nothing about peacocks and doesn't realize that the male birds seldom if ever put in an appearance before 9 or 10 o'clock when, as at present, the morning dews are so heavy. I have always assumed that the male birds linger on in bed, not because they are sleepy but simply because they prefer not to drag their trains through the moisture on every blade of grass that soaks any lady's or gentleman's train if two steps are taken before the sun has dried off the dew.

The youths that he sent to round up the bird know just as much about the ways of a peacock as I know about the folks ways of a whale. I suppose J. H. wanted to surprise me by sending the bird to me unannounced. But since the harum-scarum boys he sent couldn't get within



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yards of the bird and since the bird is accustomed to eating out of my hand, it would seem as though J. H. would have been better advised if he had undertaken the safari only after consultation. Of course the boys came back in a couple of hours, reporting they hadn't even been able to see the bird, let alone catch him. Perhaps the bird will mosey back home under his own steam this weekend.

I became a grandfather again twelve times this afternoon, --bunties atop the armoir. As soon as I heard the little ones peeping as they emerged from their shells, I sent word to Clement, the carpenter, who has been working with the painters at the big house. He lives in a pecan grove half way between here and Little River and his little girl has heard ~~from~~ of the local bunties and has been urging her papa to get a pair for her from me. Tonight the little girl must be delighted since her papa carried home the family in the cardboard carton fashioned for the hatching, --mama buntie and her whole dozen of of offspring.

I was delighted to learn from the latest memo of the encounter with the sweet basil plant. I shall enclose,-- as you will have already noticed, a sprig and a cluster of flowers on a stem which will probably have pretty well gone to pieces after its adventures through the mails. The humidity is so great that the sprig of leaves will probably also have just about gone the way of all things. Still, if its fragrance lingers on a little, you may be able, with the help of considerable imagination, to guess how delightful its aromatic sweetness perfumes the Ghana garden where every parterre is bordered with it so that each passing zephyr picks it up and wafts it which ever way the wind may be stirring. I may have mentioned that sometimes I put a leaf of it in ice Tender Leaf tea and when combined with a slice of lemon, make quite a delectable brew.

Carmen called early this morning to gossip and to relate, among other things how enchanted Mary Landes Hodges had been with her visit to Melrose, how much M. L. H. disliked the Walkers and their Enterprise, etc., etc. I called Mrs. Walker promptly, having heard that M. L. H. had asked Mrs. Walker to take her to the Louisiana Press Women's meeting in Lafayette or where ever this weekend so that she might "forget" to supply transportation and therefore be out of earshot of the bag. Margaret Dixon has consented to accept this year's Presidency of the organization and thus give Mrs. Walker a year's breather before she take up the gavel.....

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Sunday, September 16th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The heat and humidity continue, but, except for a brief shower Saturday afternoon, clear skies have been the order of the weekend.

I was happy when the big peacock decided on Saturday morning that his visit across the river had lasted long enough and he flew back to this side, landing in a tangle of bushes and vines on the margin of the river behind Fugabou's house. J. H.'s crew that had gone to capture him returned empty handed, of course. They searched the brambles on this side of the river but couldn't find him and most certainly couldn't have caught him, had they ever sighted him. Eventually the peacock decided to walk home and got as far as the garage where Charlie Turner picked him up and brought him to me. He spent the balance of the day with his associates in the wire enclosure, looking a little the worse for wear in the wake of his adventures abroad. This morning I turned them out into the gourd garden where they could readily step into the Ghana department which they all seem to like. All afternoon, or at least whenever I chanced to be in that area, the prodigal son was busy as a bee chasing the white guinea while the ladies peacocks went on with their business, not bothering to glance in the direction of the scufflers.

James and Kay stopped in about 1:30 this afternoon. They had come down to spend the afternoon and hoped I would join them to sup there. But Kay wasn't feeling too robust and after arriving, they decided they might return to town. As Ora had asked me to save this afternoon for her,

I was glad the decks which I had made it a point to keep clear from other quarters, would be equally free from entanglements from this segment.

I thought Kay looked quite well. She remained in the car and J. H., passing that way, congratulated her on her appearance and asked why she and James didn't come down for dinner. She said there was little point in her going out to



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dine as she couldn't eat anything. J. H. countered by saying with a laugh that that was just the kind of dinner guests that were always the most popular.

As Ora inclines to appear early in the afternoon when he gets down this way, I felt impelled to inquire about her intentions when it got to be 3:30. Her son answered the phone and said she was in Mary and would return about 6:30. I reckon she has had so many appointments since her return that she got her calendar mixed up a bit. I hope what she wanted to see me about was the article The Enterprise asked her to do.

As the old adage has it: it's an ill wind that doesn't blow somebody good. George Harris, a rascal if there ever was one, was turned out of Angola and appeared at his wife's home hard by the Melrose bridge one day this week. I shall drop a line to Margaret Dixon about his case. According to George, --I believe nothing he says, but there might be something in his story, he was turned out of prison six or eight months before his sentence had run out. One can secure a parole but George has refused a parole because when he got out of prison, he didn't want to have to report to anyone for the ensuing months and that I can understand, knowing George. But the State has cut down on prison funds in the present Jimmy Davis budget and since George didn't want to get out on parole and since he swears he doesn't know who signed his parole papers, one might conclude the State is finding it convenient to turn out prisoners before their terms have expired in order to make room for newly sentenced ones. If it turns out to be the case, la Dixon can do something with it as she is rather well known for her courage in pointing up chicanery in the present Administration.

If my conjecture proves correct, the news of this practice will merely add new headlines and will achieve nothing since the legislature will readily enact new laws to cover such irregularities. Still, it seems to me the public ought to be advised if the Administration is breaking laws in order to divert more operational funds from public use into their own pockets.

The great clusters of butterfly lilies along the front gallery seem heavier with perfume tonight than I can remember of any evening this season. This single one will serve to suggest the fragrance....

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Monday, September 17th, 1962.

Memorandum:

A little on the warm side, a bit on the cloudy side and humidity spilling wholesale all around.

I turned the big peacock out of the netting enclosure around 5 o'clock tonight after he had remained therein for his cooling off period for a day. Five minutes later I saw him in company with the white guinea, the latter making a great racket but the peacock acting much more civilized than formerly.

There seems to have been a dab of scuffling going on over the weekend but, so far as I know, it was all more or less confined to a single family.

I guess the McKinley Browns have five or six children,-- three boys and two or three girls. The eldest boy went to Angola a year or so ago when he shot Frog amidstships with a shotgun. That takes care of one youth.

On Saturday night the next elder or rather next younger boy, perhaps around 20, tried his hand at breaking up some furniture and got a lift by the Sheriff to the jail in town.

About 10 o'clock the third youth, perhaps 17, passed this way, hoping to find a drink but it was obvious he had already had more than he could manage successfully. While we were at dinner across the fence, we were interrupted when the boy's mama, --Log and Peter's sister, came to ask if J. H. would send for the police as the youngest of her sons was threatening to whip his papa. J. H. thought it better to wait a while and see how things turned.

This morning the boy jumped on his papa again and



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tried choking him. One of the girls, chancing to witness the doings, ran to the cotton field and summoned her mama who returned home to find her husband, a heart patient, sitting on the steps of the cabin crying and the boy was inside the house making a racket. And so the mama again journeyed up this way from her home below the spillway, asking J. H. to call the Sheriff which the merchant-planter did forthwith, the mama returning home and J. H. heading out for New Orleans and the long Arm of the Law heading down this way from town to pick up the aforesaid youth which they did indeed do so that the two younger brothers have company in the town jail at present and their elder brother hold the fort at Angola.

Fugabou is said to have worked a few days last week on Little Eva plantation, watering young pecan trees and noting those that expired during the recent drought. It seems odd, in view of the continuing dampness we have been receiving of late, that the watering of anything except Fugabou would be recommendable. Something tells me Little Eva as a job will play out for Fugabou before he really gets started. I guess he must think so, too, since he hasn't done anything about moving from his lifetime home at this bend of the river.

I wish the candleabra or candle tree or whatever it is called would slow up a little so that it might be at its pink of perfection a month hence although I shall be able to enjoy the pretty yellow candle-like blossoms for a solid month at least even though the plants may not look quite so crisp at Pilgrimage time as they do now. As I recall, however, I believe the blossoms tend to last for six or eight weeks so they will probably be pretty enough. I cannot help chuckling at the size about a dozen of these in the Ghana section have attained, --well over my head and as pert as they are pretty. And the reason I cannot help giggling is because, every day on my way to the Post Office, I pass others across the fence, purchased as young plants at the same time as the Ghana ones, and the across the fence ones aren't half so tall or luxuriant although they looked the sturdier when planted. The last shall be first, apparently, in the candleabra plant section, it would seem.....

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Tuesday, September 18th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair.

Painters and painters' assistants, carpenters and carpenters' helpers continue revolving about the big house and weeds continue thriving all over the place. About a day or two before Pilgrimage, I suppose, a gang of workmen will be swished in my direction on the theory that one can do a garden face lifting job over night.

The mention of Pilgrimage reminds me of a tale James had to tell when he dropped in for a few minutes at 1:30 today. He reported that I. S. Willard had departed for the East coast and had been by Pecan Park for a prolonged session before her departure. He said she had tried to persuade Kay to have an ante bellum costume made and help her receive at Ghana. I was never more astonished. Verily, I. S. Willard must have some mental gaps and is able to skip from one edge of same to the other without ever bothering to think what might be involved if others were to attempt to follow her.

In the first place, it is difficult for me to imagine a lady in hoop-skirts moseying about in crutches. In the second place, it is usually the custom for residents of a place to invite receptionists. In I. S. W.'s case, when she told me she knew some young girls who might help her, I said go ahead. In the first place, I don't know the younger generation and felt I. S. W. did. It never occurred to me to mention Kay's name since she tires very easily and it is beyond my imagination to picture her trying to receive five hundred people two afternoons in succession.

That she should have thought of Kay to lend her a hand at Ghana was one thing but it seemed to be



11998

quite another when Kay had declined on grounds that hana was small and the retiring section somewhat remote. I. S. W., however, was not daunted by that but said that they could forget all about Ghana and that Kay could assist Celeste at the big house. Like everybody else, Celeste makes arrangements for her assistants on her own hook and how I. S. W. would ever dream of adding a lady on crutches to that set-up, I cannot imagine. Ames pointed out at that point, that as Kay sometimes had to retire to a convenient bathroom rather more frequently than the average person and that as all the bath rooms in the big house were on the second floor, such considerations were to be taken into account. I. S. W. said that she would be glad to assist Kay up and down the steps. What would be going on at Ghana during such operations, she didn't say. The whole thing struck me as being so incredible that I could not believe my ears. If anybody knows Kay's problems, it is I. S. W. and how she should ever think of trying to engineer such a plan, I cannot imagine.

Rumor has it that, on another front, that Sister is taking what is described as a "refresher" course at some college in Shreveport and has been promised a job at the conclusion of the course. I think the semestire runs through the balance of this year. Of course I am delighted to learn she has something to do to keep her busy but am puzzled in trying to figure out what sort of a job she could be promised and how, once landed, it could be held for more than a day. Somebody has a headache ahead and may the person be fortified with endless pills for such a malady.

I have to do some work on this machine which I hope I may finish early so I may listen in to Massachusetts primary returns. Fortunately, I can get a Boston station clearly.....

11999

Wednesday, September 19th, 1962.

Memorandum:

A beautiful day with the pre-dawn hours sufficiently substituted cool to make a sheet feel comfortable.

Long before opening the envelope containing this message I knew you undoubtedly noted with relief that a new ribbon from little Miss Lee had been placed up on this machine. I caught a glimpse of Pat at the store this afternoon and immediately engaged his services.

I talked with Natalie at 6 this evening. She had had her first TV live performances this afternoon, one around 1:30 and the other half an hour or so following the first. About 325 college students in different class rooms had received her lecture which, according to all reports, went off as smoothly as anyone could imagine. She said she talked a little fast during the first lecture and, to her consternation at its conclusion, discovered she still had 15 minutes of time unused. She accordingly improvised during the balance of the time and it all came out neatly enough. She proceeded more slowly on the second broadcast and used the blackboard to stress points and the coverage came out just right on the clock. She seemed happy that her initial effort had obviously turned out to everyone's satisfaction including her own.

The reason I called her was to find out definitely if she expected to receive at Yucca during Pilgrimage. She said she expected to and I was relieved. It seems that Pat and Juanita A. have a football appointment in Baton Rouge for that weekend and a pigskin scuffle is more important than a Pilgrimage. Ann and Jack Britten have an appointment in Lafayette or some such place and the Falkers think they are going somewhere that weekend. I wanted to fill in these gaps and at the same time make such arrangements as to have assistant hostesses elected by the regular hostesses so that



00011

12000

the various people associated with the different groups will  
constitute a harmonious collection of counterparts.

I must ask somebody who knows more about radio receiving sets  
if reception on such instruments vary in places picked up, the  
one machine from the other. I may have mentioned before that  
my present machine, for example, although I never before  
had one that did so, has a way of picking up some  
Boston station with remarkable clarity, much clearer, for  
example, than any of the major New York stations. Be that  
as it may, I chanced upon this station last night when casting  
about for Massachusetts primary election returns and, it goes without  
saying, I was delighted with all I had to hear. Verily  
the citizens of the Bay State are to be congratulated in having  
two candidates for an office, either one of whom would  
display brains and civilized behavior in Washington as their  
Senatorial representative, for both Kennedy and Lodge,  
I assume, are possessed of attributes too often found but scantily  
in too many candidates in either of the major parties.

I wish radio gave more details about the Repu Ilean  
and Democratic conventions in Buffalo and Syracuse.  
I assume the present Governor will be re-elected in November  
and I like Mr. Rockefeller even if I don't subscribe much  
to many an office holder in his Republican Party.  
I knew nothing of young Mr. Morgenthau. I haven't even heard  
the candidates' names of either Party for the  
Lieutenant Governor's post. I assume the Democrats ought to  
have quite a vote-getting ticket for the Empire State electorate  
since the gubernatorial candidate is, I suppose,  
a Jew and the Attorney General candidate a negro. In view  
of the number of these races in the State, the ticket ought  
to find a lot of backers but, fortunately, a lot of  
people in the United States don't vote along racial lines.  
On the last gubernatorial go-round in Louisiana a lot  
of Baptists voted for Jimmy Davis, they said, because  
he is a Baptist but they have long since expressed the  
wish they had voted for the Catholic Morrison.....

P. S.

I forget to say in all today's doings,  
the postman, being ahead of schedule, got away  
before I dropped yesterday's memo in the box....

12001

Memorandum: Beautiful weather and a gain sufficiently cool  
after sundown to give one sufficient zip to attack  
the ensuing day with gusto. And speaking of zip, I needed plenty of it for a hurly-  
burly morning that seemed to have a little bit of everything  
in it that must have made me appear like a chicken dancing  
on a hot griddle.

I got things going early by turning the house upside  
down to give at least a part of it a thorough cleaning.  
Natalie called at 7:30 to say she had contacted Mrs. Hendricks  
who expressed herself as entranced at the prospect  
of receiving in my boudoir during Pilgrimage but  
since Thelma had already assured Mrs. Hendricks she would be  
needed to grace the old Lemee House, and since both  
Natalie and la Hendricks have Thelma's husband as President  
and boss, Mrs. Hendricks being assistant dean of women,  
it would be necessary to get Thelma's release of the  
lady from the Lemee station. I found that was not  
that easy enough by simply calling Thelma and  
telling her I wanted one of her gals to which she  
agreed promptly and with grace. But Thelma  
is difficult to detach from a telephone and what with  
a dozen things cooking on my morning agenda, it  
was quite a while before I could get away. She  
wanted to tell me endless things, including an  
account of her old Lemee Hysterical  
Ladies board meeting yesterday. Among  
other things the Board was to give three thousand dollars  
to a New Orleans architect, Wilson, I believe, to  
draw up plans for the reconstruction of the  
original Fort. That ought to please cousin  
Eugene as it would undoubtedly please anybody whose  
pet project got a three thousand dollar handout. As I  
am more interested in saving from destruction ante bellum



12002

12002

buildings still extant but tottering on the verge of  
destruction, I could fulminate about slinging  
Pilgrimage cash on building anam something whose  
appearance no one knows anything about but I'm  
not going to make a peep.

One of Earl Morris' deputies had an appointment  
to bring some Enid, Oklahoma people here for a 9 o'clock  
go-round this morning. With all I had simmering on the  
fire, I was provoked to be kept waiting half an hour.  
The people were grand but there was one point they certainly  
got confused about. After I had pushed them out of the  
front gate, they repaired to the store where they encountered  
J. H. whom they told of their enchantment at what they  
had seen and how they had been delighted with the  
primitive pictures I had painted in Ghana. At just  
that moment the artist hove into sight and the identity of  
the deer was set straight.

James came to see me at 1 o'clock, bearing  
what feels to be a couple of grand cantelope, spelled,  
I know not how, and some shrimp cocktail that  
looks mighty promising. He reports Kay is  
quite tired from the heat treatments she is  
taking three times during the current week and  
then resuming in November.

Somewhere along the line during the morning, between  
hop, skip and jump, I bumped into J. H. who  
reverted to a typical gesture.

"Oh, by the way, if there is anything you want  
to have painted at Tucon, have the painters do it....  
Anything you think should be painted might just as well  
be done now....."

Well, the bathroom needed painting and still needs  
it but what with Pilgrimage crowding up on me, I  
most certainly am not going through the rigors of all that  
such an operation would entail at this late date.  
Why it couldn't have been done when the place was  
being painted in the other sections, I shall never know  
but I am quite certain it isn't going to have a going over  
now.....

12003

12003

Friday, September 21st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Beautiful weather and cool enough at breakfast time  
for a long sleeve shirt and warm enough by 10 to discard  
discard in favor of a short sleeve one.

This morning I heard the hum of the mechanical  
cotton picker off beyond the bamboo hedge. Some of the  
plantations have their own mechanical contraptions but  
Melrose has never invested the fifteen thousand dollars or whatever  
it costs, making use instead of a migratory machine whose owner brings it over from Beaumont  
or some such place in south Texas. I suppose there are  
several reasons for the local plantation not  
investing in one, the primary reason being the  
desire on the part of the merchant-planter to provide  
sufficient work for local families to induce them  
to stay on the place and so be present when pecan  
harvest gets under way. A State law forbids the  
employment of school children for cotton picking during  
the five school days of the week and yesterday an  
enforcement found four or five children busy with the lint  
on a neighboring small farm, owned by somebody  
of color. I believe there is a fairly stiff fine  
for breaking this particular law and I think  
that is probably a good idea since it is probably the only way  
children would get much schooling before Christmas.

And speaking of the law, the youth who took  
Carrie for a ride a couple of months back is still  
in jail but trying to get out. At the time  
it was said he raped Carrie but the word had  
the European meaning of abducting rather than a sex act  
the meaning seems to be in American parlance. The parents  
of the youth are trying to get Carrie to drop the prosecution  
of the case but Carrie insists she needs a five hundred dollar  
balm to soothe her distress over the incident and that  
otherwise the case will have to be pushed. Whether  
five hundred dollars means anything to the wacky youth involved or  
not, I wouldn't know but probably his parents who will have



12004

to pay will have some ideas on that point.

Mrs. Walker called this evening to ask me to check on a couple of points covering captions supplied her by the Hysterical Ladies covering scripts to be supplied 15 or 20 newspapers in the Gulf States area covering the tour. When that had been taken care of, she mentioned she had just thought of a method of retaining the little red school houses across the nation which, in such large measure, have been abandoned for one single big school, the pupils of which have to be transported for miles to attend. The ride isn't so bad, it is said, but so often children under this arrangement have to leave home before daybreak and don't get back home until after dark. Mrs. Walker says she is going to invite John and Helma and Superintendent of the Schools Griffin and wife to dine on one of these nights and suggest that the local college should sponsor an effort to have the more remote little schools made use of the closed circuit TV instruction which Natalie has this week initiated for the college. Whether the method would be successful or not is something that has to be tried to determine, but in the mean time it would provide Northwestern with some excellent national publicity in educational circles and since the program is already functioning at the college, it ought to be comparatively easy to extend it to out-lying schools. It will be interesting to see how the Kyser-Griffin reaction turns out to such a recommendation.

I intended mentioning yesterday how happy I was to be able to share with James the splendid clippings, --the pictorial items, received earlier from little Miss Lee. James was particularly interested in the reproduction of the primitive murals and the pheasants and found the reproduction of the man carrying the bananas just grand, even as I had already found them.

Somebody said today that Governor Barnett's sister was buried the same day this week the Governor flew to Oxford, Miss., to deny the colored youth access to the university. I didn't hear about the death of the Governor's sister and wonder if she is the one who was here a while back and was so astonished at evidences of negro success in establishing a plantation economy.....

12005

Sun  
Sunday, October 23rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

October's bright blue weather is already upon us, -- cloudless skies, pleasantly warm in the daylight hours, pleasantly cool at night. The registers came this way this afternoon. I thought Kay looked unusually well but somehow got the impression she isn't moving with as much facility as a while back. She is using two crutches again. It seemed to me she had more difficulty sitting down and getting up. Her manifestation of gaiety, however, was heartening, probably a transitory gesture from one inclined toward hypochondria. Friday's visit to the hospital for heat treatment ended in considerable satisfaction all around. The doctors at Gabriella in Alexandria found that the progress the patient was making was as such a nature as to warrant continuation.... interruptions.....

Mrs. Walker just called to have me check on some captions for illustrations being sent to about twenty newspapers around the Gulf States area for Pilgrimage publicity. The Enterprise supplies wire service for this area and although Carmen does everything she can to throw everything into the lap of the times, she simply has to unbend slightly in the direction of the Enterprise now and then if publicity in the newspapers gets anywhere. The Hysterical Ladies don't mind giving Cousin Eugene three thousand dollars to have plans made for the Fort but the organization has always been adamant about spending anything for publicity in behalf of the organization that produces the money. It's cock-eyed, of course, but one must accept that in any organization that, as most organizations do, find themselves staffed by wacky people. Mrs. Walker tells me that the organization continues supplying the same old photographs which have been used over and over again in the past. The Enterprise, accordingly, and at its own expense, is providing some up to date



12006

12006

likenesses for this go round. ...another interruption...

Carmen called to say TV stations in Alexandria, Shreveport and Monroe would be carrying local live broadcasts of the Pilgrimage during the week before the opening gun and, --but before she got a chance to proceed, I made it clear that I would be having enough to say grace over at home without journeying abroad. It was good I got that out of my system in advance. Alexandria will send an official on Saturday to make a round with Thelma and Carmen of places that will be filmed in advance of the live broadcasts. The cameras will appear for the filming early next week. I guess I was about to say before the last interruption that Mrs. Walker tells me that for the majority if not all of the photographs she is using in the Gulf States area will be new pictures. The Enterprise has taken during the past two or three months and that they will concentrate on Melrose scenes. Her mother told me Saturday that she had seen one of the new photographs showing the portrait of Grandpere Augustin with Lestan appearing along side. She said it was a splendid likeness of both gentlemen but that is probably a matter of opinion or at least open to some interpretation since all the pictures I have seen of Lestan in the past decade and a half have, by the magic of the camera, made him look about twenty years younger than he does in life. This is probably on the good side for the picture but not particularly convincing as a documentary. I am not complaining about this, however, since it is generally agreed that the craddle does have certain advantages over the grave. Smile.

I shall be interested to see how the New Orleans Appeals Court rules on the morrow about the Meredith registration at Oxford, Miss. It seems to boil down to a question as to whether the Federal or the State has the power to enforce or circumvent the rights of the citizen as guaranteed by the Constitution. I guess the Federal will win, I hope. There may be quite a scuffle in Mississippi educational circles as a result and Governor Barnett will come off the winner at future balloting in the State, who ever way the thing turns with strife on earth, ill and right will toward men seemingly to the fore where ever Ross Barnett, Leander Perez and their type appear.....

12007

12007

Monday, September 24th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Another lovely day with the thermometer "hovering" around 90 during the afternoon. Late this afternoon a thin veil of clouds filtered the sun's rays and tonight the filter continues although not thick enough to blot out Venus.

George Dornement sent me a package of avocado specimens that arrived in the post. There were five of them, three of which I gave to Emmet and Erwin because they were ever ripe and the other two I passed along to the lady across the fence because I know she is fond of them for salads. They were rather different in shape and size from those which I have received in the past from Escandide, California. These Florida ones are round in contrast to the long ones from California, more the shape of an egg plant than a cucumber. They were about the size of a grapefruit or a croquet ball. The ducks loved them in spite of the over-ripeness of the ones they sampled. I did not see the lady when I left them at her house but I shall probably hear about them on the morrow.

Painters gotten painting at the big house and the carpenters continue to carpenter, I guess, from the sounds of hammers and saws floating over this way during the afternoon. Gardener helpers were silent even as they were all last week since there weren't any. I do what I can to anticipate Pilgrimage needs but my progress is leisurely and the pilgrims will have to accept what they see and like it or reject it, under the circumstances.

I know not if the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals made any ruling in the Oxford business today. As yet, only Shreveport and other radio stations have been consulted and all they have had to say about the case was nothing at all although there was the reading of an official Executive order by Governor Barnett, instructing all Mississippi police to arrest any Federal officer attempting to arrest a State policeman when the



12008

latter is attempting to carry out State laws. Perhaps I shall find something about today's doings in the New Orleans Court on some later broadcast tonight. Silence on this subject by local stations reminds me of something ames related the other day. It seems a TV station was presenting an entertaining program up to the time some colored artists were scheduled to appear whereupon a notice was suddenly inserted, stating that the number could not be presented and for the duration of the number, the screen remained blank although the music went right along.

The guineas continue to display odd behavior, demonstrating nervousness or uncertainty, especially at meal time. Both last night and tonight, after first dark, I heard the call of the "who owl" as some of my plantation friends name the hoet owl. I shouldn't be surprised if it may be the "who owl" who has picked off a few young guineas after they have gone to roost. I was impressed by the fact that all of the young white ones disappeared first and conclude their coloring may make it easier for the marauder to catch sight of them on the branches where they fold up their beards. The "who owls" in turn are being disturbed by the painters, I believe. I think these birds don't relish the strong aroma of turpentine that arises from the live oak behind the big house where sections of lattice, temporarily removed from beneath the back gallery, are being painted under the branches. The other morning an owl flew from somewhere, I believe from the oak, landing in a nandina bush just outside the screening of the summer dining room where we were breakfasting, -- a place an owl would never dream of going in daylight, were he not upset about something. Eugene got up from the table to go outside to observe the bird more closely but it flew away when he opened the screen door. I hope the owl doesn't decide to go in for lager fare and take a whack at the white peacock.

I held the thought Lyme is enjoying some of the same bright blue weather of October in September, even as are we.....

12009

Tuesday, September 25th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Another lovely day with thin clouds developing in the late afternoon and Shreveport scouting showers for the morrow.

I must have made an error in the notation I made about your missing column. I was thinking it was May 28th but presume it was June 28th. I started checking on back numbers and discovered May 24th was the piece about little Miss Dermen and that there could be no May 28th. Things came to an abrupt halt at that point with an interruption and when next I have assistance, I shall check agains June 28th.

And speaking of columns, I laughed at myself last night when correspondence was finished and I told myself I had better get busy and knock off a script for a week from Thursday. I hadn't the vaguest notion about what I might write and wondered why I wrote the Guinea at the top of the page. This happens sometimes, jettisoning down a title when I haven't the slightest notion as to what may follow. But the thing got going and was probably a mighty disjuncted business but done it was and allowed me the luxury of folding up my beard and calling it a day.

There were two or three 'phone calls today, this and that person asking me if I planned to attend the reception at the college tonight for new members of the faculty. Naturally my responses were in the negative. A couple of the callers were kind enough to invite me to sup in town and amplified the enticement by offering to drive down to pick me up and return me safe and sound. It would be nice seeing Thelma and John and a few other folks who will probably be present but I don't find the game worth the candle. Carmen called late this afternoon to ask if she and her sister would see me there but I told her the same thing, --No. I think Carmen will get quite a jolt when she discovers on arrival that Thelma has asked Mrs. Walker to pour, an honor Carmen has always taken for granted as a bracket reserved exclusively for herself, I believe.



12010

Quite a few people gummed up  
what little I attempted today by way of pilgrimage preparations,--  
Natchitoches, Houston and heaven knows where all.

James dropped in for an hour's chat around one o'clock. He said yesterday's Alexandria trip was the last that will have to be made for treatments in some time. There is an October Shreveport conference with the bone specialist and it will not be necessary for a return to Alexandria before November. Offhand it would seem as though this might enable to hop over to The Bluff in between times but I didn't raise the question.

He read me a couple of reviews of recent books from U. S. News or some such publication. One was on the subject of a book by some Brazilian negress, Child of Darkness, or some such title by E. P. Dutton, as publisher. I gather the subject matter must be distinctly on the seamy side.

James brought a couple of melons which cannot possibly be as delicious as these he brought last week which were the most wonderful ones I ever ate. There was a sticker on one of the melons reading something like Dane and Dane, 42nd. I have no doubt this may tell all to dealers in melons but to a mere consumer like me, it doesn't mean a thing.

I listened to the heavyweight championship fight in Chicago tonight which, if scant in other things, at least had the virtue of brevity. --2 minutes and 6 seconds, I believe they said. Some gentleman named Floyd Patterson somehow got himself knocked out by a gentleman whose name never did come through very plainly on my station, --Sonny Lister or Listen or some such. About all the particulars regarding each contestant I rounded up was that Mr. Patterson seems to have a mama who was among these present and Mr. Listen or Mr. Lister or whatever thinks he has between 15 and 25 brothers and sisters, many of whom he has never seen. From broadcasts of earlier champion fights participated in by Mr. Patterson, he is a gentleman of color, as I recall but nobody has yet informed me if Mr. Lister or Listen or whatever and all his kin folks are in the category of white or colored.

12011

Wednesday, September 26th, 19672.

**Memorandum:** A gentle sprinkle from about 10 o'clock last night until 10 o'clock this morning. The cotton crop didn't need it but my side of the fence welcomed it. The clouds remained after the rain, with the sun breaking through at sunset but the cloud coverage returning within a few minutes. We are promised partly cloudy skies for the morrow and an 80 degree temperature.

I can't see I accomplished anything much today although there is much to be undertaken. The dampness should have discouraged open air operations but didn't. I had in mind to drop the Pope a congratulatory note on the evident success his reign is enjoying but didn't get a round to touch this machine. I shall get the note off to Vatican City by tomorrow's post. It is of not the slightest importance except that I think one does well to say Amen occasionally on matters effecting the public, even to St. Peter's successor if one approves his doings as do I, --without knowing a thing about the details but somehow getting the impression an effort is being made to encourage peace on earth and good will toward men in that quarter, and the Lord knows they need a lot of such effort in places like Mississippi at the moment.

I was amused this morning at the two reports coming to hand by phone regarding last night's reception at the President's residence at the college. Carmen called first. She said everything was lovely but that Thelma looked awful in some sort of an orange gown with d, be of lade and shimmery satin around and about. She

that the American people are not only interested in the business of the world, but in the business of the world as a whole. The American people are not only interested in the business of the world, but in the business of the world as a whole. The American people are not only interested in the business of the world, but in the business of the world as a whole.



12012

didn't mention Mrs. Walker. A little later Mrs. Walker called. She gave some points regarding the doings and said Thelma looked perfectly charming charming in a gown of lovely golden sheen, resembling the lovely gold of maple leaves in autumn, the gown covered in a beautiful lace through with the levliness of the pale golden hues shown in the most pleasing fashion imaginable. As Carmen usually sings the praises of Thelma and everything concerned with her, I assume Carmen's report may have been slightly stained by the fact that, unlike Mrs. Walker, she was not on the original list of those hidden to pour. Verily, none are so blind as those who let prejudice get into the optic department.

The coffee hour this morning was characterized by many complaints about the rigors imposed on anyone having anything to do with a Pilgrimage and, as in years gone by in other September, mine hostess spoke vehemently about never being in another go-round. One day this determination will carry through, I suppose, and, if so, will save Lestan, at least, a lot of work.

A night or two ago somebody living on the margin of the river in town, perhaps Dan Henry, shot a nutria that weighed around 40 pounds. I never realized before these animals grew so great.

According to reports, R. B. Williams has been created a Knight of Saint Gregory by the Pope. I suppose this is a gesture in recognition of the gift made by R.B. and wife of several acres of ground in East Hatchitoches for a new Convent-school. One naturally wonders if a Papal knighthood carries with it not only a title for the man so knighted but also provides the wife of the knight with the title of Lady, as in England in such a n instance as Sir Winston and Lady Churchill. I shall write my Lord R.B. a note of congratulation but shall restrain my impulse to include Lady Williams, especially in view of the fact that the latter, being a new comer into the fold of those of the True Faith, such a barb might hit a somewhat delicate spot.

What scant space the American Yachting victory at Newport received in yesterday's various news media in this area, what with the Barnett business stewing, the world champion fist-a-cuffing, the Cuban business, the Billy Sel Estes business and so many things besides the yachting business.....

12013

Thursday, September 27th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Ideal weather. Sent off 800ish today, around 58 last night. The promise is for fair skies again on the morrow.

I am enclosing the June 28th, 1962 Cancerver Memo in pursuance of yesterday's reference to same. In the event this does not complete your file, do let me know whatever dates may be missing and it will be as easy as pie to secure the missing dates.

The coffee hour was more sunny this morning. Tomorrow at dawnning mine hostess departs for a frolic in South Louisiana, --New Iberia, Baton Rouge and it were, until about Tuesday, as I understand it.

I smiled to myself this morning at the Post Office when something along the lines anticipated happened. I handed 12 or 15 out-going letters to the clerk, an ex-Catholic, picked up my incoming mail, pausing at the door to chat for a moment with J. H. As I started on, J. H. called to me to say the clerk wanted to tell me I had omitted something from the address on one of the letters. The clerk, in turn, handed me one of the letters, pointing out that all I had put on it for an address was

His Holiness, Pope John, I had omitted something from the address was

Vatican City. I explained to this former member of the "true Faith" that there was only one Pope at present and that he was the autocrat of an independent kingdom and that the name of that kingdom is Vatican City and that it was my understanding the Papacy didn't relish being tucked into Rome or Italy but preferred being addressed as in fact it is, a separate independent governmental organization. I had felt instinctively the brevity of the address would startle the clerk and so it certainly did.



12014

12014

The weekend of Pilgrimage will see many newspaper people and politicians journeying to Baton Rouge where some sort of doings is scheduled to take place as of Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Liz Friedman will accompany her husband, the Senator, and that will leave a gap in Celeste's line of hostesses. It will take Mrs. Walker from my ranks and, although nothing was said about Baton Rouge by Ann W. Britten, it may well be that she and Jack will also be stepping in at the capitol that weekend when making steps in other places down that way.

I had a call from town the other day from someone asking for some particulars regarding pilgrimage details. It was perhaps Carmen or Thelma. They mentioned having recently heard from Rosalyn Aswell who, it seems, has been in Connecticut visiting her son, Melvin Douglas, Jr. I had not realized he had given up his educational post in Denmark and returned to this country. At one time it was said there was a strain in relations between mother and son. I am glad this apparently has been done away with.

Once in a while the store annoys me by telling people they can walk about the gardens but do not advise me of the permission granted. This afternoon a man, his wife and the latter's sister and two boys, perhaps 12 and 14 were given a go-ahead signal, unbeknown to me. The geron-ups went their way, the boys ran loose. I came upon them as they had finished knocking off with bamboo poles the clusters of persimmons that give such a star colorful note to the African House scene. They said they were just playing and added that some of the pheasants had flown out of their enclosure when they went to look at them and had forgotten to close the door to the enclosure. I suppose the pheasants, the ringneck ones may return. Obviously the persimmons will not get back to their home base.

In regard to the barge of deadly poison gas that sank a year ago in the Mississippi in the Atchafalaya area, it is interesting that, so far as I can find out, nothing has ever been said as to what use these chemicals were intended and it is interesting that barges with similar cargo are regularly being transported on the same stream. I assume it is some military use that calls for such merchandise and in such quantity.....

12015

12015

Friday, September 28th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair.

Things in Mississippi seem to be reaching quite a pitch. One seems to find so many different types of statements about the doings. A case in point is the artist who often paints by TV and radio, seldom, I suppose, comprehending what is going on but primarily diverted by the noises. As regards the Meredith case she said today she couldn't understand why that colored boy was making such a fuss about going to a white folks' school. Former General Walker in Dallas says he is ready to lead ten thousand volunteers if and when they head out for Mississippi to help Governor Barnett. With General Walker and the Ku Klux Klan both supporting him, the Governor must feel possessed of quite an embarrassment of riches. Willie Reinach, a former State Representative from some North Louisiana Parishes and unsuccessful candidate for Louisiana Governor on the last go-round stated today that he was leaving for Mississippi so he may return and "alert" the citizens of the Pelican State if they decide to go to Governor Barnett's assistance. As a leading light in the Citizens Council, Reinach, ex-General Walker and their nigh shirt brigade ought to present quite a picture. One cannot help wondering just how silly people can get. It would appear that Governor Barnett had better start climbing down from his high horse unless, as may be the case, he prefers to wreck the Democratic Administration in his rule or ruin the course. Now that he has defied the orders of a Federal Court, the Administration in Washington is bound to clamp down on him since we would have no government at all if 50 State Governors could successfully defy the Federal Courts whenever they chanced to disagree with them. What is so lamentable about this whole business is the black-eye it is giving the United States the world around.

I was interested to hear the Edward Morgan news comment tonight, having to do exclusively with the appearance on October 1st



12016

12015

of the Pacific Coast publication of The New York Times. I wish I had known its publication date was to start so soon for I should have liked to ask somebody whether in the Los Angeles area to procure a copy of the first day's issue. Mr. Morgan mentioned the European edition of The New York Times about which I know nothing, not even where it is published. I assume it may be Paris since British publishers might think England has enough papers without encouraging a New York paper to edge-in on the British advertising income. I take it as a matter of course that the so-called European edition of the New York Times is more or less cut down to the size of the Paris editions of, say, The New York Herald, The Chicago Tribune which were the only two American papers published in the French capital when I knew the place. I take it the New York Times didn't appear there until after the 2nd World War. None of the above is more than casually interesting to me but one is always bound to be interested in the New York Times if one tries to pass as being civilized.

James dropped in to see me at 1 o'clock this noon and chatted for an hour and a half before returning to town. He reported Kay as feeling better today, following a bad night on Wednesday-Thursday. He said Kay had received a letter from I. S. Willard who suggested Kay embrace me on her account. I seldom am honored by Willard epistles and, I must confess, I am quite contented to receive word second hand from a Mexican jumping bean whose flying about would never make it possible for me to address an envelope in that direction with the slightest hope of it ever reaching the aforesaid addressee.

J. H. and I supposed together tonight, --Celeste and the clerk both having flown off in all directions.....

12017

12018

Sunday, September 30th, 1962.

Memorandum: Fair and mild. It has been such a peaceful weekend hereabouts and I held the thought little Miss Lee experienced a similar one.

Saturday morning was busy enough trying to make the most of one stalwart helper in tackling some of the more arduous chores that must be wrapped up before two weeks from yesterday opens up the pilgrimage flood gates.

In the afternoon I engineered a tour and a conference with Alexandria TV people, -- Mrs. Odum who has a morning TV program and wants to use Cane River things on same, a Mr. Cunningham who is architect for an afternoon program and a Mr. Murphy whose business I never did grasp. They were all very pleasant and the afternoon ran along speedily enough.

While they were still here at 5:15, Mrs. Spinks called from town. She said her daughter-in-law was with her and they wondered if they might leave a cake for me at the store. I told them the store would be closed by the time they got here and to come anyway. And come they did and it was dark before they left. The daughter-in-law and husband, Johnny, are living in Hatchiteches where Johnny is attending school. They were married in August and why they, like so many other kids, have to rush into matrimony before getting a school education, I know not. I think the senior Spinks have made several trips over this way, -- Hatchiteches, -- during the past couple of months, -- a most natural impulse to visit their only child, Johnny, and his bride but, I feel instinctively, an impulse that should not be responded to unless the seniors want to help the juniors work out their life plans.

Oxford wasn't the only place that had a rough Sunday for something must have given our feathered friends a thorough working over. I saw none of the scads of vireos today. I haven't seen the lady peacock of color but I did find her husband, the big peacock, well chewed up. One of the white ducks apparently has a broken leg, all of which adds up to quite a casualty list for residents who were neither at the henkey-tank or in Mississippi.



12018

It was pleasant to break bread with J. H. alone today. He called me this morning to invite me to breakfast with him and although I usually do not go out for breakfast on Sunday I made an exception in this instance. We dined at noon and it was very pleasant, too.

Carmen had asked me to tour some people on behalf of a distant relative, -- a young man from South Louisiana, two gentlemen from Cuba, two from Panama. .... interruption.... Carmen calling to relate the endless details about somebody falling down steps and expiring.

James came around 4 and we went to the camp to see a collection of hunter canvases he has gathered together and I found them all remarkable and as much unlike anything she has done before as to suggest the work of a distinctly different artist.

Then we drove to town and dined at the Town House and thence to Pecan Park where I found Kay quite chipper. James read us the article and excerpts from the Mark Twain article in this week's Life, an issue I had particularly enjoyed Friday night by myself, especially the picture from New Guinea or where ever it was Michael Rockefeller had been working with the Harvard Expedition when he was lost.

On Saturday I sent an air mail -- special delivery to the Farley O'Briens, asking them to purchase a west coast edition of the New York Times when it appears in Los Angeles tomorrow morning, thinking it would be nice for the Melrose Library.

Natalie had called me at noon, asking me to write out whatever her assistant will have to say when receiving in the Yucca boudoir. She seemed happy but terribly rushed, what with the TV business and other demands. I had to laugh and at the same time felt a little sorry for her when she told me that R. B. had really appreciated my letter of congratulations to him for the Knight of St. Gregory honor. There is always something pitiful about wives having to thank people for gestures in the direction of the husbands.

On leaving Kay, James and I drove up to the Williams home and we were delighted to find nobody there and that gave me a chance to return a cake plate on which the lady had brought me a o. last summer. And so back home and so I am here and now want to see what's going on at Oxford.....

12019

Monday, October 1st, 1962.

Memorandum: Gray in the morning, blue in the afternoon and tonight. So stands the appearance of the sky for this first day of October and I guess about the same could be said for the situation in Mississippi where it was Confederate gray and dawning but Yankee blue by noon.

I regretted the occasion for the mass funerals today among our feathered friends. I haven't totaled the death list entirely as yet but it runs something like two peacocks, five ducks and 43 banties. I assume some sort of plague must have swept away many of these since it seems improbably the canine terror couldn't have accounted for all. I missed to knock wood when I venture to report that the last 4 observed the two geese, one colored peacock and his wife mate and the four guineas were right side up but the plague sweeps death through with such speed that one never knows.

As for the Mississippi fandango, it is interesting to note how Louisiana radio reporting differs from that in other places, as, for example, Shreveport states on its anti-Kennedy KWKH that one third of the Oxford mob were students. Other stations report that more than two thirds of the mob was made up of people in no way connected with the university and some hailing from hundreds of miles away.

Ex-General Walker was arrested for leading the "charge of the Light Brigade". For quite a while many people in which category I figure, have felt that the ex-General was definitely on the wacky side. Now Mississippi politicians are beginning to say so. The poor man is undoubtedly mentally ill but then, in my opinion, so are the big wigs in the Shreveport Times, in the Governor's chair in Jackson and so on. It is such a pity people off center can set so much mischief in motion and find such enthusiastic audience to applaud their cock-eyed ways.



61031

12020

I listened to the NBC round up of doings in Mississippi, --a program which, I believe, was rigged up to TV, too. One point was made toward the end which I thought both painful and true, so far as more than 99 percent of the colored people I knew in this area are concerned although the NBC speaker was thinking of the majority of them across the nation; --they don't know what the current squabble in Mississippi is all about and are not particularly happy it is being made and this in spite of the fact that the effort if some day carried to its conclusion, will benefit their status.

Somehow there is at once something sad and at the same time a dab of hilarity connected with it in so far as it resembles a remark made by the artist the other day to James. He is forever bringing things to the artist and to various small children down this way and the other day, one finding some handsome looking squashes in the super-market in town, he bought one and brought it to the artist. She surveyed it with detachment for a moment and blandly observed:

"Yeah...it's alright but I'd like it better if you had done brought a pumpkin."

I learned from Kay last night that she had had a note from I. S. Willard who had planned to be in Manhattan this week. To nobody's surprise, I. S. Willard changed her plans and is in New Orleans rather than New York I realize, of course, that it is said all ladies and some gentlemen reserve their right to change their minds, some times for good reasons, often for no reason at all but I must say I. S. Willard exercises that right with more regularity than anyone I ever knew.

With all the baseball news and the Mississippi thing bubbling, the news reporters on radio, at least, didn't find time to mention what success the west coast edition of the New York Times had today on its initial bow but I have no doubt it was a sell out. And now I must get to work....

12021

61031

Tuesday, October 2nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and a cool mid 70 in daylight and a mid 50 by night. I am just back from a turn in the Ghana garden. The heavens were marvelous with a tender new moon in the west and blazing Venus in the east.

What goes on in the furred and feathered sections still puzzles me. The boxer is looking just fine, you know. I buried one peacock myself 24 hours ago and a helper told me he had buried another --a colored hen, but either the corpse I put under ground has risen or the female of the series has come to life for I certainly saw an extra one with the white hen and the colored male in the garden at dusk-dark. It was too late for seeing much and so I shall have to wait until the morrow to see which has figured in the miracle. As for the black cat twins, one is as nimble as usual and fit as a fiddle. The other has vanished and one might assume he has preceded to a cat heaven although too often in the past successive Grandpas have played tricks on me and come back to life and I hope this one does, the twins made such a pretty and congenial set of pets.

A note from Rebina mentions that Miss Dermen of Briarwood is going to have a hot house. I wonder what a hot house means in this case. Frequently people mean a conservatory, constructed of metal frames supporting the sides and roof of glass. For several reasons, I cannot picture such a building at Briarwood. In the first place, such a thing usually costs quite a bit but perhaps I. S. D. has found a sponsor. In the second place, it seems to me a conservatory presupposes endless pipes carrying steam or water of some kind to heat the place, not to mention some sort of a thing to produce hot water or the steam and water is scarce at Briarwood. As Caroline has never got beyond an open fireplace to keep herself from freezing in her own house, the thought of a furnace, requiring someone to stoke same, to make the glass house hot seems equally improbable. It is silly to speculate on what Miss Dermen might every dream up but this latest report quite out-does anything I can recall from earlier times.



12021

12022

Before calling it a day last night, I knocked off a Cane River Memo by way of advertising the Church fair across the way. I was going along pretty well when a telephone call from Carmen knocked all I had done out of mind and I limped through the balance of required lines without much notion as to what I had had to say before the gossip hour began. I can't remember what I even called the thing, --something like Fair Feed for Fair People, or some such which certainly leaves a lot of interpretation by the reader if that, indeed, was the title, long enough for a family reunion, intervenes as between this paragraph and the foregoing. It is the custom of the cat twins to sit on the little shelf, just beyond the picture window every night, to stand by while they observe me galloping up and down the typewriter's keyboard. For the last few nights there has been but one and when he thinks it's time for a Goodnight snack, he stands up on his back legs and scratches at the window to say as much. I heard the scratching and glancing in that direction I was filled with delight when I saw both Tom and Tem-tem making signs they were ready for a handout. Naturally it didn't take me long to welcome home the wondering boy.

On the newspaper front, I was interested to learn the other day that Cousin Arthur Watson had remarked to somebody that there were eight stories in Shreveport, Alexandria, Baton Rouge and other Louisiana papers, all coming out of Hatchiteches, --stories of general interest that would never have been in these papers which, in the past, have skipped Hatchiteches news, primarily because the particulars had never been transmitted to them until Mrs. Walker instituted the wire service, --Associated Press, I believe, and that Hatchiteches was accordingly become better known because of the day to day appearance of news items from a Hatchiteches date line. I am sure this observation from such a source must have pleased both the Editor and Publisher of the Enterprise. And now for a dab of work and thence to the radio to learn how the aftermath of the battle of Oxford appears on the air.....

12021

12023

Wednesday, October 3rd, 1962.

Memorandum: Fair and cool. Every once in a while the broadcasting boys get a break when enough things of interest happen so that they have to cut down their scripts instead of casting about for news to report. Anyone of at least three events today ought to have provided the microphone boys with ample material, -- the telephone company's tragic explosion in upper Manhattan, the successful encircling of the globe half a dozen times by somebody whose name sounds as though it might be spelled Chira to rhyme with Hurrah, and finally, the Giants victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers to get the World Series going tomorrow between the Giants and the Yankees. While listening to the news, I was afraid for a moment they were going to forget completely the Oxford scuffle and the whereabouts of ex-General Walker but finally these two items got in as a sort of set of footnotes.

I had a couple of helpers today and they accomplished much in the gardening section by way of chopping out borders and hauling out trash.

Around 11 this morning, I thought a wild Indian had arrived when Shreveport blew in with a female guest, the latter, remarkable to relate, seeming to be civilized. They were here for noon dinner, a couple of peagan people being here, too. I am happy to report that Shreveport returned to Shreveport shortly after dinner and things could get going at a normal pace once more after the brief interruption.

I have given up trying to figure what is what in the peacock section. The biggest male whom I had thought dead is walking about, somewhat sedately but



12024

nevertheless, up and about. After being in a trance for 3 days, this ability to get about seems like a miracle. The colored hen wasn't walking this noon but this evening was taking a few steps. In the case of the big male, I noticed one striking example of his slowness of reflexes. Usually he eats from my hand his head and neck darting forward to take a piece of bread or biscuit and then jerks back with equal swiftness. This evening, however, when he began taking food for the first time in three days, the forward motion of his head and neck was definitely on the slow motion side. He paused momentarily on catching hold of the biscuit and then very slowly the head and neck moved back to the normal position. In speaking of his usual agility reminds me how silly the bird looked one day a few months back when, in his eagerness to grab at a biscuit in my hand, he leaped off the ground as his head and neck went forward. It had been raining earlier and as his feet left the ground, he somehow didn't coordinate things quite perfectly so that, after grabbing the mouthful, instead of getting his feet back on the ground, he somehow slipped and sat slap in the middle of a mud-puddle to his obvious astonishment and my merriment.

I don't remember if I mentioned last night that the radio announced Cousin Emmet L. Irwin had summoned a meeting of the Citizens Council of New Orleans for next Tuesday night to alert the "patriotic" citizens of what has been going on in Mississippi, -- just as though anybody on earth didn't know. What impressed me about the mention of this meeting over the air was that for the first time in my life I heard that Cousin Emmet has a middle initial, -- L, -- and as I began turning names over in my mind to see if I could come up with something likely, the only two that would seem to fit were either Lunatic or Low Pugh. Smile.

James just called to say Kay is feeling much better and is eating things again and that's good news. And so things turn and so must I.....

12025

Thursday, October 4th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and cool.

Today's post brought an untrimmed sample of the pamphlet the Enterprise will publish about Ghana and forward to that building so each pilgrim may be given one during the visit. The text is stuff published during the summer and not new to little Miss Lee who has also probably seen most if not all of the illustrations. In spite of that, this try sheet is being enclosed regardless and possibly the final appearance will look a little better and same will be forwarded when they come to hand. I gather the CottonCrucifixion can be made out fairly well. To secure this shot, the photographer climbed up on the rafters so that the camera was on a level with the painting which perhaps therefore shows up in this photograph as following the slant of the roof, registering the obvious that the painting is at a slightly different angle from the camera which was probably quite verticle. In any event, I trust you can make it out alright.

I guess the illustration on the back page must be of the wedding, an interesting painting but one that is exceedingly difficult to catch with a camera since it is so tucked up under the projecting eaves.

The merchant-planter caught me by the coat tails this morning as I was leaving the post office. He said he had just received a note from Dr. Joel Fletcher of Southwestern, asking if it would be alright if he and his wife stopped off on their way to Hatchiteches on Thursday, October 20th. I gather the merchant-planter, remembering the fandango when last the Fletchers came to his house to dine and were late for he asked me what I thought about having them dine at the big house.



12026

Recalling that the multiples of 7 come on Sundays this month, I remarked that instead of the 20th being on a Thursday it was bound to be on a Saturday and that usually Saturdays run the risk of too many Henrys. He and Joel will have to straighten out the date and then we shall eventually find out what is what, I hope.

Celeste wasn't feeling well today and said she was going to see the lady-doctor this afternoon. One runs the big road and wonders why one doesn't have more pet for stationary procedures.

Incredible as it seems to me at least, the painters are still splashing paint around in the big house. If they ever get back to Yucca, it is bound to be next week when I shall be in no frame of mind to bother with painters. I have no idea when they began their operations at this bend of the river but it seems to me the three men have been going at it steadily all summer. Be that as it may, Pilgrimage time in mid October isn't the happiest moment for such operations as now seems inevitable.

I am happy to report the health of the peacocks seems to be improving. The white one which hasn't yet sagged with the prevailing distemper, seemed to enjoy the mid afternoon tea and a couple of hours later, the pre-dark supper but the three ones of color didn't appear ever hungry. I certainly hope the latter are on the mend. The geese and the guineas haven't slumped as yet and I hold the thought that only the banties and ducks will get their names chalked up on the definitely dead list.

When I hear talk about the battle of Oxford, I so frequently recall how a few years ago when Little King was driving from North Carolina or Maryland, stopped at Meridian, Miss., to get a spark plug tightened and although he was in uniform, no garage would touch the car and no garage would let him use a wrench to fix the thing and how happy he reported himself as being when he had crossed the Mississippi bridge into Louisiana.

12027

Friday, October 5th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and mild.

News from around and about seems dull enough. I shall tuck in a few enclosures but they are of no particular interest. There is a sheet from the Shreveport Journal carrying the same photo of Mildred that appeared in The Enterprise. The picture on the same page of John and Thelma seems to be a bit on the more relaxed side.

At supper tonight, J. H. remarked that Sister had just called from Shreveport and wanted to know if the white peacock still lived. I allowed as how it was. He said Sister reported it had been terribly sick when she was here on Wednesday. I told him it was the only bird in that group that hadn't died at all. He observed that that was about as straight as things usually come from that quarter. He said that as he understood from the conversation, Blythe is very sick at the home of Frances Rand Jack in Shreveport and it was suggested by Sister that J. H. send flowers. I assume Blythe is back from Woodstock but if she is no sicker than the white peacock, she must be in pretty good shape.

I got a lot of work done in the gardens today and am delighted to note that the zinnias that self sowed are already beginning to bloom in the circle of the Ghana garden, leading me to assume that that focal point may be fairly colorful a week hence. And saying that I am reminded that before I fold up my beard tonight, I had better make a round by moonlight and turn off the hose I set going on them late this afternoon.

I reckon I should have given more attention to the houses today but I shall jam through the cleaning on them during the coming week. I wanted to perk up the gardens a little in anticipation of tomorrow morning's TV cameras which are scheduled to start turning at 9. I am going to be in the garden at 9.



12028

think I shall ask them not to include any interiors on this film.

The big house continues quite helter skelter inside what with the painters still having a go at things. At the 9 o'clock coffee hour, Celeste was wondering what the painters would do with all their ladders over next week end but I assured her they would be well hidden, --the ladders if not the painters. It is said the painters move on to Magnolia when, if ever, they complete the local job. I haven't heard any tentative date for that move and assume it will be sometime in November. It seems one of the painters has remained at home in town for the last day or two suffering from influenza..

Tessie Millespugh just called to ask me if I had heard Mrs. Odum's TV show over an Alexandria station this afternoon. I had not. She said she related many particulars about the Cane River counter to figure in the impending tour and, in speaking of Melrose, referred to the murals in the African House, executed by some Cane River artist of Melrose whose name, if she remembered correctly, is Catherine Henry. Smile.

The artist, by the way, has been telephoning me with unusual regularity of late. She always reports she has no news but just through she would say Howdy. James mentioned the other day that the artist had told him she wasn't going to preside in the African House this year during Pilgrimage. I assume the several phone calls are being made in hopes I will inquire about her intentions for that merry-go-round but I, for one, am not going to breathe a word about the matter. Of course her presence adds much, by way of color, if I may use the word but the artist has never been able to comprehend that simply by being here and meeting the people, her business has invariably picked up wonderfully and kept her busy as a bee all through the winter. But if I can't make her understand by this late date, I am not going to attempt any more and she can make a round or not and which ever way she decides will be alright. Zno tjat's jpw tjemgs stand wetj Catherine Henry and thus begineth

12029

Sunday, October 7th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Pure summer with just an occasional wisp of thin clouds during the day. The thermometer stood in the 90's and the humidity "heaved" around the same figure. News reporters at Baton Rouge complained that the young gentlemen spending Saturday afternoon chasing a little old pigskin about the stadium, --L. S. U. and George Tee. found the 89 degree humidity trying for their strenuous sport.

I did a day's work Saturday before 9 o'clock when the TV cameras were scheduled to start rolling here. They arrived promptly at 2:15 in the afternoon, Saturday a week ago we had stressed the point it was imperative that the filming be started here, moving up the river and finishing at Hatchiteches. Of course they merely reversed the arrangements but notified nobody so that no one in town knew they were at work there. I talked with Thelma and Carmen around 11:30 but they had seen nothing of them and neither had Lucille Prudhomme at Oakland. But eventually both she and I saw them and neither of us were enchanted with the inconvenience. There was one advantage I could extract out of it, however. They were all so tired when they got here they were content to take a couple of shots at the big house, one remote one of Ghana and the African House and Yucca and that was that. I had held back breakfast for the peacocks, geese and guineas, thinking their presence in the film might lend some life to it but by 2:15 had arrived, the birds had all dined and retired to where ever they hide at the hour of full heat and neither the photographers who didn't know about them nor I who did know about them, cared.



12031

12030

I talked with I. S. Willard last night. She cut out her Manhattan portion of her trip, staying for a few days at Virginia Beach and thence on to Washington for a few days.

Today was wonderfully quiet. J. H., Celeste, the clerk, his wife and boy took off for Lafayette or some such place at 10 this morning. J. H. wanted to see a man down yonder who plants pecans in little cans and, I suppose, sells them to people who dream of growing pecan trees. I suppose the travelers will get back sometime tonight.

Except for a few plantation friends, I saw nobody today and rejoiced at the quiet. James called me this morning at 10 to say Kay hadn't slept last night and accordingly they would not get down this way today. I think Kay doesn't sleep very well at night. I am sure I wouldn't if I didn't get up before noon as a habit. Several people have called me during the past few months to ask when one may phone the Registers without fear of disturbing the lady. I don't know the answer but suggest 7 or 8 p.m. might be as good as any time although on occasion the lady is sleeping then, too, and so social centgots dwindle before ever getting started and, oddly enough, nobody seems to imagine why. As between this paragraph and the foregoing, a slight interval of two hours elapses. I. S. Willard called to say she had dined with Kay and James at the Town House and that she felt Kay who has suddenly thrown her diet overboard again, was making very dubious choices in the food she was ordering, items that would be not too easy for a person not on a diet.

From the Town House, I. S. W. shifted to Washington about which she had no end of things to relate about changes in ways of life since the old days, colored people appearing in the Mayflower Hotel and so on, after which we had to re-fight the battle of Oxford and so far, far into the night. And so I shall fold, holding the thought it may have been quiet today in Lyme.....

12031

Monday, October 8th, 1962.

Memorandum:

A little too warm and much too damp. There were a few patches of blue this morning but by noon it was raining and although the sun sent a few shafts of gold across the landscape as it slid below the Montrose hills, it wasn't very convincing. The moon is discernable tonight but a thin veil of clouds filters anything suggesting brilliancy.

My coffee hour was pleasant enough and I trust the same mood may continue. I can but marvel that both J. H. and Celeste can find nothing more restful to do than travel 400 miles on the Sabbath. I know not where all they traveled but it appears there were plenty of towns whizzed through. Dinner was in Opelousas or however one spells the name of that place. There's a restaurant there which is well known by people who appreciate good food and they dined there. It is called something like Ladees or Lidees or some such and is near the Court House, I am told. It is run by people of color, has one waiter for the 10 or 12 tables and one has never seen a menu in the place. In short, one dines on what the house has prepared and even people who don't appreciate quality in food say it's grand. I think sea food such as shrimp is frequently served and may have been yesterday but the marvelous baked chicken was all I heard about. Other towns in the general neighborhood that get a quick once-over were Lafayette, St. Martinsville and New Iberia, where a stop was made at Betty and Keith Courage's. Supper was in Lecompte and so back home by 8:30 to conclude the trip begun at 10 in the morning. Four hundred miles with time out for a conference about pecan trees, stops for dinner and supper and visits to kin folks and I'm too old fashioned to yearn for such traveling.

I did a little talking with town today but nothing of any particular interest. Thelma called to say how disappointed nothing had appeared in the Sunday Shreveport Times about next Saturday's and Sunday's Pilgrimage. Mrs. Walker who was handling the matter was disappointed, too.



12032

She inquired about the scheduled feature story to see what the Special Features editor who explained it was all about. She thought the story would be more effective if held to next Sunday's date line when Shreveport readers, on catching sight of the story on Sunday morning, would drop everything and head southward for "atchiteches." Some would, perhaps, but mighty few. Furthermore Sunday's news wouldn't do much to swell Saturday's flow of tourists. I think the Shreveport Times should have advised that the story was being held but it didn't and neither did the Times Picayune. Perhaps the Picayune also thinks everybody in the Crescent City next Sunday morning, on reading their paper, will drop everything and journey afar but I doubt it.

Thanks to this afternoon's shower, I got quite a lot of inside stuff done. The Ghana house got turned upside down and I shall better little with that for the balance of the week except to put it in order, what with much of the scrubbing having been done by scrubbers and not by decorators. I suppose I shall make a big old wooden platter of gourds and vegetables to rest on the shelf between the dolls depicting the Reverend and Madam Shaw. I have some pretty eggplants, squash, gourds, okra, peppers and things to be plucked from the adjacent garden and they ought to provide some attractive color combinations. Perhaps I shall do one for the African House and an ever sized one for the dining room table of the big house. Perhaps I shall toss some persimmons into something or other for the Yucca living room. Friday will be time enough to have a go at that effort, plucking as I shall do whatever I use after the day has about played out so that the stuff will seem reasonably fresh on the morrow.

I hung a few dozen attractive gourds on bamboo poles this afternoon and suspended same from the struts supporting the African House roof. I placed these at the back where they will be seen by people patronizing the Coca-Cola dispensary and the tables strewn with cookbooks and whatnot and that section will look pretty enough. And now I am bound to get to work.....

12033

Tuesday, October 9th, 1962.

Memorandum: Warm and humid.

My day got started early or rather my yesterday spilled over into today since it was nearly 1:30 this morning before I arose from my desk and flattened myself out for a dab of shut-eye before 4:45 rolled 'round. I had not been working steadily at my desk, what with I. S. Willard calling for an hour's interlude of chit-chat about the Lord knows what. She mentioned having dined with Kay and James at the Town House on Sunday night and expressed the opinion that Kay, after suddenly taking herself off the strictest diet, jumped completely over the barriers and ordered items on the menu which to I. S.W. seemed to be of the types that would put something of a strain on people who didn't imagine there was anything wrong with their digestion.

I remarked to I. S.W. that I never call Pecan Park since I never know when I might be certain my call would not be disturbing sleep. She said she thought that one might call almost any evening between 6 and 8 in the evening.

Mrs. Walker called me this morning to congratulate me on what had just been called to her attention in the form of some kind of a story in a Lake Charles, La., newspaper which stated that I am the owner of famed Melrose Plantation. Imagine.

Having a helper this afternoon, I decided for several reasons but primarily for Natalie's sake this weekend, that I would do well to give a thorough cleaning to the books ten shelves of books from floor to ceiling in the living room. The Lord alone knows how many hundreds or thousands of volumes there are but I know there are a great many and that they really did need going over. Accordingly all of them were removed from their shelves and taken



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out on the gallery, given a working over and then placed back  
in their accustomed places and I was glad when the whole  
chore had been completed.

There was much brass cleaning, too, and no end of window  
washing and general tidying up.

The painters, three strong, appeared during the  
afternoon to paint the back gallery which they did and then  
went on to paint the sun dial and the fluted column on which  
it rests. One of the painters opined that the  
pillar ought to last forever, so far as resistance to dampness  
is concerned since the interior of the entire shaft  
seems to be filled with honey and the wax in which the  
honey is stored ought to give wonderful protection to  
the hollow interior. The painters didn't seem  
frightened by the numbers of bees constantly entering  
and leaving the object of their attention and  
went right ahead with their work. When they had finished that  
minor undertaking, they came to me to express their sorrow  
that during the operations, the sun dial had somehow  
lost its balance, toppling toward the bamboo hedge but not  
actually crashing to the ground but by dint of some  
miracle of determination, somehow hanging suspended from  
its base atop the pillar but hanging down until  
what had formerly been the top now found itself within  
3 or 4 feet from the ground. They obviously  
it seemed to me, thought I was going to frown and make  
strange noises and hurriedly assured me they thought  
they could elevate the thing into its original  
position the morrow. I laughed and said I hoped they  
knew what they were talking about but I, for one,  
had no intention of undertaking anything of the sort,  
the sort, what with the weight of the dial itself plus  
the activity of the bees swarming about.

A telephone call from a Lake Charles  
book shop this afternoon was in the nature of  
an order for fifteen Melrose Plantation  
cook books. I take it the article as mentioned  
above must have brought forth fruit for the book shop and  
me as an old plantation owner. Smile....

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Wednesday, October 10th, 1962.

Memorandum:

A beautiful day to look at but too warm and humid  
to humid to feel with comfort. Tonight is lovely,  
levelly, --cloudless and much moon

I thought it was an unwise decision on somebody's part this  
morning when it was decided the painters would honor me  
with their efforts. I welcomed their services alright but  
in all honesty thought it would have been better all around to  
concentrate on the big house where the second floor is in  
a complete shambles what with furniture scattered and jammed all  
over the galleries awaiting a second paint coat in  
two or three of the major rooms. But to me they came  
and I didn't protest. They began by laying down a  
barrage on the bees of the white pillar. After that the  
sun dial was hoisted into place and, to my surprise and gratification,  
parts of it that had been crying for repairs were indeed repaired.  
I figure the painters are simply bored with their unending painting  
and welcomed an excuse to frolic at something else.

But they did some painting, too, including the  
bathrooms at Yucca, long over due and the outside of the living room  
and boudoir doors and the inside of the screen doors to same. If  
one steps to imagine such a combination, one would  
put one's feet down on such a combination since  
it makes it impossible to close either of the two sets of doors  
for each opening which must be left ajar to prevent the slow drying  
paint from sticking. In deep summer when cotton spraying  
had eliminated the mosquito this wouldn't have mattered  
but now that the air planes are folded up and spraying put aside,  
the mosquito is busy-busy and I resort to an electric fan turned  
toward the opening in the boudoir where there is a light that  
would have them sailing in madly, were not the breeze too much for them.

Although I had quite a program on for the day, I  
was nevertheless delighted to see James around 2 this  
afternoon. He had bought some pumpkins for me and  
I shall be making use of them over the weekend for decoys.

He says Ray continues eating things and looks  
well. She did not come down today, however, as she did not  
sleep much last night and accordingly wanted to spend the



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day in bed. I should think today's sleep wouldn't encourage tonight's sleep but I don't pretend understanding how that household operates.

Carmen just called to say tonight's Shreveport Journal has a Pilgrimage story with a picture of Leta pointing at a Hunter mural. She will probably send me the clipping and I shall pass it along to little Miss Lee.

Just as I finished the above paragraph, Kay called to thank me for a radio station's cook book I had sent along to her by James. He sounded just fine and expressed the hope that cooler weather would be here before long so we could all enjoy the camp again.

I was happy to discover several fruit-laden eggplant collections in three of the Ghana parterres, two of the plants bearing a half dozen of the imperial colored fruit in direct line with the candletree bushes, the golden candles so striking in juxtaposition to the rich deep purple of the eggplants. The individual parterres show signs of autumnal disorder but the occasional explosions of coccinea, some scarlet, some white, much rose, plus the yellows and purples mentioned above give an effect that is wistfully colorful and the newly blossoming young minia plants add a central galaxy of old fashioned hues that somehow ties the whole composition together prettily enough. And mentioning the Ghana garden reminds me I had better slide over that way before folding up my heard. I left water running in Louella's section of the Unicorn House so that she might have an ample supply that would spill over into the Lady Amherst section and thence on to the butterfly lily department at the end of the house. A little flooding by Louella and the lilies will be delightful alike to Louella and the lilies while the Lady Amherst family can find ample rest that are sufficiently dry for their satisfaction and so I shall not do any rushing about turning off the hose.

So things turn as the busy weekend approacheth and I am thankful things are going along as well as they are. I hold the thought the impending one at Lyme may be as restful as mine will be dizzy.....

12037

Thursday, October 11th, 1962.

Memorandum: I have just received a letter from Fair. A Des Moines station tonight spoke of the heat wave Iowa is currently experiencing and so are we. They say it is a record.

I never saw Louella roses than those I found awaiting me in today's air mail from Lyme. The decoration of the card was so exquisite.

I was delighted with the shift of surroundings as the message progressed and I was especially enchanted to envision the open air setting, the ducks and all.

It goes without saying I rejoice to learn there is a chance little Miss Lee may be able to enjoy a breather, even though, I suppose, it will be all too brief. I held the thought that a maximum of relaxation may be realized from the momentary let-up and that doing nothing during the interim may pay lush dividends in the resulting opportunity for catching up on rest.

I am so appreciative of the thoughtfulness exhibited in sending me the clippings along with the note and I am happy to say that the larger envelope containing the more voluminous ones can be hand by the same post. I believe James may be passing this way on the morrow and I shall make the most of the opportunity to turn through them with him.

As for the news of Richard Pratt's wife, I was quite taken aback for she was one of these people, vaguely in physical appearance reminding me of Essie Mae, which is just another way of saying one never thinks of them in any way but going on and on forever. Thanks to your kindness in acquainting me with the news, I shall write Richard forthwith. They were such



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a perfect couple, the loss of one will mean a complete re-orientation to life, I believe, and Richard should receive a brief note now and two or three more lengthy letters before November runs its course.

I am filled with admiration to you for your own expressions, so adroitly handled, in regard to the five cent cigar. You hit the nail on the head so perfectly.

Stalie called me this evening, about 5 o'clock to ask me on two points about Saturday and Sunday. As has happened before, the girls didn't get together too perfectly when Helma and Carmen prepared their particulars. At least one, possibly more, bit of advertising mentions the afternoon tour as being from 1 until 5:30 whereas it is generally understood among most participants on the receiving end that the opening gun is at 2 o'clock. This has gummed things up before when pilgrims put in an appearance an hour earlier than expected. With not a soul in the big house or in the African or Ghana houses, it presents a problem.

I have most of the work rounded up so far as this year's go-round is concerned and I hold the thought of half day on the morrow may see it all taken care of. There will be, as there always will be, people who simply have to appear the day before the thing is scheduled and, as you may readily imagine, that tends to bog down things still unattended to. I was frankly surprised this afternoon when Juanita B. appeared at Yucca unannounced, bringing with her two young matrons who are making the tour on Saturday or Sunday. Why Juanita B. should have dropped in with them and why they wanted to see the place when things were being pushed around in anticipation of the weekend doings, I shall never know. There will be more of the same thing on the morrow just as always happens.

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12039

Friday, October 12th, 1962.

Memorandum: The weather is fair and warm. The Weather Bureau predicts the same for the weekend.

The hysterical ladies ought to sell quite a few Coca-colas, what with the thermometer hovering around in the 80's and 90's. A truck arrived around 5 o'clock today, depositing 50 cases of cokes and a metal table or counter, the men on the truck putting several cases of bottles into the cabinet and covering them with ice. It seems to me we went through this same thing last year although I had forgotten about it until it happened again this evening. Naturally, in current temperatures, the ice isn't going to last very long since there is no covering at all over the ice, --no top to the cabinet and no covering such as tarpaulin, paper or anything. Naturally I be-stirred myself to find some canvas which may tend to slow down the melting a little.

My day, naturally enough, has been busy and tomorrow I must be-stir myself a little earlier than usual to get a flock of stuff out of the way before noon.

There were the average numbers of smiles and sighs in a rapidly turning pattern of preparations of which I shall touch on one or two. By dint of some telephoning yesterday, Mr. and Mrs. Walker and I got it arranged that James would pick up some cards to be attached to tiles, --Cotton Harvest, and the pamphlet about Ghana. James was instructed to pick up the two packages by stopping at The Enterprise and asking for Louise who would know all about same. James arrived here at 12:30 and I was glad to have the cards. Louise had forgotten to give him the other package. I called I. S. Williard and asked her to bring the pamphlets on the morrow. At 5 o'clock the Pat Kellys arrived with the missing pamphlets and Pat laughingly remarked they could have

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arrived half an hour earlier but it took I. S. Willard exactly  
one half hour after reaching them by 'phone to explain they were  
to pick up the aforesaid package.

When I went to attend to the coke delivery, I was  
enchanted not at all to discover that the painters had  
given up painting to make a frame for the mirror. Sister  
had brought down a month or two ago. They were preparing to  
install the glass slip in the place on the east side of the  
African House where the cokes were to be placed. I suggested  
we let the installation of the peacock paraphernalia  
until after the pilgrims and the cokes had vanished.

Celeste visited me a couple times between 4 and 5. She  
related laughingly one of her morning problems at the  
big house. At 9 she had left Little Robert's son,  
Merel, a boy larger than I, doing some work upstairs  
in the big house while she went to have coffee. On  
her return, the painters were still painting at one end of  
the house, Dereatha, who is Merel's aunt, was downstairs  
busy between kitchen stove and diningroom table and Merel  
was walking about in the sunshine in the parterre between big house  
and the African one. Celeste asked Merel if he had already  
finished the work he was doing upstairs and he responded in the  
negative, explaining that "that deer upstairs, the green one,  
closed without anybody around and the wind wasn't blowing and  
so I git's out." Merel is big enough to knock out  
two men and a dozen ghosts single handed but  
Merel wasn't taking any chances against the latter. When  
Merel returned to his labors on the second floor when somebody  
would go along with him.

I was sorry James was in a "slow hurry" and that I was,  
too, so that we did no more than scan the headlines of the  
grand assortment of clippings, both of us determined to go into  
same on Monday.

Low Paul came home early this morning and Louella seems  
enchanted. I suppose they, the guineas and peacocks will have  
busy afternoons this weekend. I held the thought we  
may all slow down, come Monday.....

12041

Sunday, October 14th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Yesterday the thermometer and barometer stood in the  
90's. Today the thermometer was perhaps in the upper 80's,  
what with cloud coverage, and following a 10 o'clock  
shower around 10 this morning, the clouds con-  
tinued and once or twice between 1 and 3:30 there were minor sprinkles.  
The skies cleared around 5 and tonight the moon is grand.

Naturally I was busy all Saturday morning but things were  
ready when 1 o'clock arrived. I so seldom wear woollen at this  
season, my black pants felt like a furnace. The  
long sleeves of the white shirt plus the gay cravate around my neck in  
addition of the calico vest tended to make  
the atmospheric situation rather more trying than they were but  
I was slap happy when everybody had gone both last night  
and tonight when I could divest myself of my costume  
and slide into something cooler.

I think we had less people this year than on some  
occasions but quality made up for quantity, so many  
of the pilgrims seemed so interested.

I am going to recommend that in the future  
the Society play down the feature wherein  
teen-agers come in buses, supposedly under the  
supervision of one or two teachers. With  
a single exception the teen agers leaped from the buses and  
scatters like a flock of pigeons, suddenly turned loose  
from a temporary cage, fanning out in every direction,  
interested in nothing so much as chasing peacocks, guineas  
or geese, streaking across parterres and through flower beds to  
no advantage to anyone or anything except their own  
desire to be sweeping everything out of their way. I had  
thought it would be so pleasant to have the various types of birds gracing  
the gardens but I suddenly readlized on Saturday  
that such a hope was vain and accordingly I kept them



12042

rounded up in their basements today.

There were so many pleasant people, I can only regret I didn't have an opportunity ever to finish a conversation with any individual. Some Dr. Hyde of Alexandria said he had asked Blythe to come up with him but she had said she preferred coming a little later. He said she had been a little indisposed in Shreveport but was all right and back home.

Among the unexpected things that happened occurred before I made my tour in the African House. Some people, descending from the upper story, were directed to me to answer their question: Do all the beds have mirrors under them and, if so, why. I can so easily see this point being blown up testifies so incredible that one will never recognize them but they will add another chapter to the Melrose saga. I may have mentioned that the painters last Friday were going to erect the glass for the peacocks under the eaves of the African House where the Coca-cola cases were to be stationed during the tour. I suggested that effort be shelved until the tour was over. The glass was accordingly removed and, as it turns out, was placed under the ante bellum speel bed upstairs in the African House. The face was turned up rather than down to guarantee greater safety, since one could glimpse it before getting a foot under the bed. Naturally pilgrims saw the thing and never dreaming of the ultimate use to which it is to be put, began speculating on the reason why a bed such have such a thing under it. It seems to me I can already hear Lyle spinning a vast rigamarole about it and Miss Cammie giggling as Lyle would we be taller and taller tales about it.

Felice Gary of Dallas with her mother and sister invited me to dine with them at St. Augustin's and Thelma and Edna West invited me to be their guest at the same place but I declined all around, being glad to forego the pleasures of the board for the bed when the day was done.

I only saw Ora momentarily, she being late and I insisting she go early to attend to guests at home. She brought me a sweet little golden bell from Chartres and a little gold isecusburner from the same place. And so the tour is achieved for 1962 and I'll relate more about it subsequently.

12043

Monday, October 15th, 1962.

Memorandum:

A beautiful summer's day. The sunshine filtered through a thin gauze, transparent enough to let the blue of Heaven dominate the celestial arrangements. A pleasant but vagrant breeze rushed about in little gusts and then vanished only to re-appear in child-like play. Today is the first I have noticed this year when, as always happens in October, Summer seems to climb up and sit astride the top rail of the fence, dreaming of what she has been up to since June 21st and asking herself if she isn't a little late in having ignored the September 21st date for her departure which hasn't as yet taken place. One morning late last week before the first suggestion of dawn, the far away sound of geese heading southward. Perhaps the Canadian nesting places are already being taken over by the Jack Frost. But the call of the wild geese doesn't seem to have exerted any influence on the humming birds who were feeding in knots of six or eight on the clusters of butterfly lilies before the pilgrims departed. A different season cannot be far in the offing but as yet Summer lingers on with patience and almost sorrowful, it would seem, of her inevitable withdrawal and while this mood continues, it is truly wonderful. Logically enough, most of my day was given over to putting things back to rights around and about the several houses. When I carried away the big white soup tureen from the dining room table, in the big house, I found myself wondering why I don't make more vegetable arrangements locally, where material abounds. I should be stirring myself more often in that direction. I sent the eggplant, belle pepar and such like across the fence and then got busy and made myself another combination of materials for Yucca. I especially liked the long flat wooden tray on the shelf just behind this desk in which five pumpkins, each about the



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size of a big grapefruit, readily supply all the orange color anyone could dream of. With some black Indian corn on the cob, some scarlet hot peppers and clusters of okra for the green and some tiny eggplants about the size of oranges for the purple, not to mention some snowy onions and some yellow small gourds, you can readily imagine there is enough to have moved a Cezanne to reach for his brush.

On Saturday night, as soon as Ghana had been closed, I. S. Willard and her heavy of hostesses, --I believe she had six, not one of whom I should have selected, stopped at Celeste's for chit-chat, sandwiches and libations. I never attend these gatherings. I. S. Willard opined she had nearly died of thirst during the afternoon as she had had neither water nor a coke. I had gone over to see about taking her away on my arm from Ghana several times but she was forever busy with people while her young hostesses were draped about every where but inside Ghana. Why she didn't slave them to relax, I don't know.

Celeste prepared I. S. W. a thermos of ice water for Sunday's vigil and from her business each time I passed the Ghana house on Sunday, she seemed busy and declined all proffered outings. I think she was wrong both evenings to have gone directly to Celeste's frolic without advising me that she had closed her post for the night and transacting whatever little business there was to be attended to instead of taking it to Celeste's gathering. I. S. W. is admirable in so many respects but I declare she can originate more tangles out of nothing than most anyone I know.

I'm a little behind in correspondence but am hoping to bring things into line within a day or so. I so often think of little Miss Lee and how she must long for opportunities to take pen in hand, especially to say He to vacation friends.....

12045

Tuesday, October 16th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and warm this morning. Drizzle most of the afternoon. Cool tonight and heaps of stars.

At the coffee hour this morning, mine hostess opined:

"Next year at Pilgrimage, I think we ought to....."

Last week it was positively no Pilgrimage next year. I take it this one must have pleased the lady.

A couple of weeks ago a passing pilgrim from Pensacola mentioned some interesting publications on Spanish administration in Louisiana and threatened to send me a few shortly. I wasn't surprised, therefore, when last Thursday or Friday I was handed a package and was told, in response to my inquiry at the Post Office, that it came from Pensacola.

Like many another piece of mail of no pressing importance, I set it aside until I could get Melrose rigged up and Pilgrimage out of the way. Having got all that out of my way, I was glad to get around to looking at the post and was astonished to discover, on opening the aforesaid package that it had not stemmed from Pensacola but Pennsylvania and that it contained samples of the new tiles. I wish I had known this last Saturday and Sunday but I didn't, but I shall be a little more diligent in the future, I hope.

I am sending these sample to The Enterprise so that they may be photographed and thence on to the lady in Manhattan with the United Nations Gift Shop acquaintances.

About an hour after I had folded up my beard last night, I unfolded it promptly on hearing the phone ring. It was, of all people at that hour, the artist. She said she had been feeling alright over the weekend but that she had thought it better not to grace the African House just in case she failed to feel up to snuff any time during either afternoon. She talked around and around and



12046

finally came to the point, to wit, she wanted an African House plate and would pay me some time as she didn't have any money.. Remarkable girl, our artist.

James just called. He said he had driven Kay to Shreveport yesterday for her appointment with Dr. Oberdyke and that the doctor found his patient had been making fine progress since last he had seen her. James seemed so pleased. I wonder how one inclined toward hypochondria feels on hearing such news. James reported there is an apple pie in their ice box, intended solely for my use. I take it it may be from Kay's true hand as she lovely to bake. I admonished him not to let me find him casting eyes of yearning in that direction. They threaten to honor me with a visit on the morrow or next day.

J. H. dined at the big house today, his wife spending the day at the country club immediately following the 9 o'clock coffee hour. He wasn't pleased with Secretary of Agriculture Freeman's speech at the meeting in New Orleans. J. H. and J. H. Williams had driven down to the Crescent City on Sunday afternoon to attend the Monday morning Agriculture meeting. I heard a report of the Freeman speech in which he was quoted as stressing the need to save the lands of small farmers for the small farmers. I can imagine the Freeman approach would have enchanted few large operators present. It was interesting on quite another tack at today's dinner that the merchant planter mentioned the same thing J. H. Williams' sister-in-law mentioned the other day, to wit, that J. H. Williams had found a couple of colored boys in a pecan tree somewhere on a piece of his far-flung property and had taken them to his gin somewhere near town and be-labored them with a rope. Somehow it called back to memory the carpenter whose arm J. H. W. had broken and then had the colored carpenter arrested for having tried to assault him. Frankly, I was surprised his sister-in-law should have mentioned the rope episode but probably she doesn't know what a dubious reputation the five-cent cigar's brother has among people up and down Cane River, especially in the cabins, and this in spite of the fact that he operates no holdings in this area.

And now I must do a column and then call it a day.....

12047

Wednesday, October 17th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cool in the 70's with a vague sort of sprinkle during the morning and glimpses of sunshine during the afternoon.

I had so much to do today but achieved so little. I wanted to get the bamboo trellises of the gourd garden down but didn't get very far.

Before 9 this morning a young gentleman appeared. He said "that lady what had the baby", --B. Randolph of Calfar had told him to disown himself thus. He is B.'s godchild and is named Brown and he lives on Heratie Street in Greenwich Village and works for the New York Times.

I took him for coffee across the fence, after advising the lady of our approach. She was enchanted. After that I gave him a rather thorough tour which he seemed to enjoy to the fullest. He had presented me with a loaf of bread B. had made for me, together with a bottle of wine somebody in France had made. Mr. Brown said the Garden Randolphs were still talking about their regret in not getting the Rand camp.

There were several telephone calls and a slight pass at the bamboo and it was time for dinner. I had been too busy this morning to get the news and looked forward to getting caught up at 12:30 but James arrived at 12:20 and remained until quarter of 3. He was bearing an apple pie which Kay had made for me and a big slab of cheese that probably somebody in Wisconsin had made. James didn't have much news but we were glad to get caught up on personalities, --I. S.W., the artist and so on.

I started for the store to pick up some chocolate milk when I encountered Pat who was bringing me a slab of pound cake J. Vanita B. had sent for me. He said everybody was doing fine at home and that he and wife had had a fine time in Baton Rouge at the football game Saturday.



12048

Back to Yucca to grab some instruments to work on the bamboo but before I could dash out another tap and it was Blythe Rand and Helen Brewer. Blythe was bearing no end of crackers, feed stuffs of various varieties, including grape juice, of all things. If I die of starvation before morning, it isn't the fault of either B. Randolph, James Register, Juanita Henry or Blythe Rand.

Blythe had much to relate about her outing at Woodstock to which she journeyed twice, spending part of her two months vacation as between that place and Manhattan. She said Paul King Rand thought she looked pale and she had had some blood transfusions because she wasn't getting enough oxygen. I thought she appeared as full of vim and vigor as usual today and she was, of course, driving her own car.

She thought the place looked pretty in its fresh paint but she was seemingly more concerned about the appearance of the butterfly lilies. It seems that she, like Cézanne, haven't had any blossoms this year while dozens of clusters atop 6 and 8 foot stems along the Yucca gallery and at the end of the Unicorn House give an impression of horticultural opulence that seems to delight everyone.

Natu ally I didn't mention the name of Mrs. Gordon Randolph to Blythe as Blythe seems to have been jealous of B. Blythe didn't mention B., on her part, but she did say that people around Colfax report no pecaness at all and Mr. Brown had reported the same thing this morning. I find it odd that the whole country seems to be experiencing a shortage this year in contrast to last year's abundance everywhere.

And now I must get busy and do some work which I should have undertaken long before now. I hold the thought bright blue weather may still be obtaining in Lyme.....

12049

Thursday, October 18th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and pleasantly cool just as October weather is supposed to be.

While at coffee at 9 this morning, she was called to the phone, returning to the gallery to report the one time overseer, Mr. Earnest, had just died at the Hatchiteches hospital. I didn't know he had been ailing and assumed he was at his home, a few houses down the road below the bulb garden. It seems he had been in town for a couple of days. Low blood pressure, pneumonia and kidney difficulties were listed as his final difficulties.

Mr. Earnest was a descendant of one of the early colonial families in this area and he had indeed, descended considerably. I guess it was during the winter that J. H. remarked one day that he had never known but one man, Mr. Earnest, who lived without eating. I suppose he had been tipsy every day for years. Beth Lyle and I always treated him as he treated us, --with extreme politeness. Beth Lyle and I knew quite well, however, that Mr. Earnest, in every respect save his place of residence, was a pure hillbilly.

The thing that has always made me smile whenever Mr. Earnest's name came to mind was a serious remark he made to me one day on the store gallery. We had had a pleasant little shower, perhaps half an inch, and when the sky had cleared, I went to the store. On passing Mr. Earnest on the gallery, I said Good evening and remarked that it had been a nice little rain.

"Yes, it sure was," responded civilly enough.... "About 15 or 20 inches, I reckon."

Peer Mr. Earnest. His last name was Derban or Derbonne or how ever, --the name was often spelled so differently in the colonial records and I



12051

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never did inquire how the present generation spells it.

I am forever being surprised at controversies over nothing that get started by one thing or another in Cane River Memo. I may have mentioned yesterday that Blythe took me to task for having quite the cook as recommending an old reester in making gumbo. She declared an old reester is no good and that nobody but a nigger would use one for gumbo. Nigger is a word Blythe uses so frequently. This morning I had three calls from Natchiteches ladies, each congratulating me on the gumbo recipe reported in the column and all especially endorsing the use of an old reester. I mentioned that an Alexandria lady had said a fat hen was far superior for such a purpose but each lady in turn said a fat hen had nothing but fat on her and ruined a gumbo. This evening I had a fourth call from still another white lady in town who wanted to speak about the gumbo recipe. She said she always used an old reester and that never did she get out riding with her husband that she didn't cast eyes of yearning at every old reester they might catch sight of while in the big road. I think Blythe frequently likes to start an argument about anything and doesn't care which side she takes, just so long as she can fuss about something and yesterday the old reester was the first thing coming readily to hand. One of these days when casting about for a Cane River subject, I might do well to start feathers flying by tossing in an old reester and a fat hen and see what the readers want to do about same.

And now for a day of galloping up and down this keyboard and thence to dreamland.

12051

12051

Friday, October 19th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Beautiful day and an equally marvelous night. Mid 80's at noon, upper 50's tonight, I reckon. I'm just back for a turn in the Ghana garden. The stars are so brilliant and the number of fireflies astonishing. I find it remarkable how deep summer cotton dusting can finish off insects so completely and yet how rapidly they can re-appear, once the airplanes are folded up for the season.

Of all the tempests in a teapot I did 't expect, the one currently raging as to which is better in making gumbo, an old reester or a fat hen beats everything. There were more phone calls today on the subject and I feel bound to use the fracas as the basis for a column when I find myself without anything in particular to write about.

I must remember to consult a couple of physicians, too, on a point James related when he dropped in this afternoon. He had been to see the artist and she, being in a talkative mood, mentioned that one of her grandmothers, a slave, used to tell her a special method employed by certain masters when pregnant slaves merited a whipping. According to the artist, her grandmother stated that in such cases, the female slave was placed over the end of a barrel, the end being open, so that the unborn child she was carrying would fit into the barrel before the lash was applied to the slave's buttocks and back. The torso from breasts to legs being thus protected from the lash, there was no danger the unborn child would suffer any physical pre-natal effects. Some of these ante bellum masters could certainly think up some things alright. I shudder when I think of what some of their descendants might have come up with, if given the chances their grandpapa's had. Miss Cammie was forever saying: "Mother used to say" that on Bayou Lafourche, when a planter didn't treat his slaves humanely, the neighboring planters would get together and force the culprit to sell his slaves, after which the proceeds would be given him and he would be forced to leave the community. I know of at least one planter named Isaac Erwin who was never forced to sell any slaves but who could think up some mighty harrowing things by way of being mean to his slaves on occasion.



12052

Returning to Cane River Memo, I am forever being confused by re-action to same. I was frankly shame-faced for knocking off such a trite one, --Mid Term or Mid Year Elections, appearing in this week's issue. Picture my surprise when a few people took the trouble to write or rather to phone me to express satisfaction with same and James almost startled me today when he said that while he didn't find it as entertaining as some, Kay thought it one of the better ones. I know Kay doesn't like the Kennedys and it is possible the people phoning don't either and possibly they read the article in such a way as to find in it a criticism of the President although, as I recall, I believe I expressed the thought it would be better if no President and no ex-President ever got tangled up in Congressional and gubernatorial campaigns.

With the days getting shorter, I am giving the birds their supper a little earlier these days and they all seem to be ready for same when I make a gesture in their direction around a quarter to five. Frequently supper at the big house is delayed these nights when peacan trucks barge in about the time the supper bell taps. Often we have fried chicken or some such and the two black cats journey with me to the big house and sit on the back steps, knowing full well that when I come out eventually, I shall be bearing something toothsome for them. They walk with me over to Yucca where they eat on the gallery. All summer the birds have noted this custom and have trailed along as far as the gate to get their extra handout. But now that first dark comes along sometimes before I leave the big house, it is interesting that the peacocks and guineas, having supper earlier and taken to the higher reaches of the bigger trees, somehow manage to keep an eye on me as I journey from the big house to Yucca and come flying pellmell out of semi-darkness for a hot biscuit or some such. I give them their post supper under the African House eaves and tonight they made quite an interesting pattern, much of which was exceedingly obscure, where the darker feathers figures in the thing but the white guinea, the white peacock and the white rabbit were distinct enough even though the three dark peacocks and the three gray guineas were difficult to distinguish and so were the two black cats when they got around to join in the warm biscuit festival. So turns the plantation world and so I must turn to answering a few letters and thence to my pillow.....

12053

Sunday, October 21st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Saturday morning was warm and sunny, the afternoon developed clouds and an inch and a half of rain descended. Today was supposed to be clear but the clouds lingered on and the thermometer didn't get above the 60's. Naturally I rejoice that this weekend's weather came this weekend and not last.

The Jeel Fletchers with five guests from Lafayette were scheduled to appear Saturday afternoon between 3 and 4. Celeste asked me to tell them she had an appointment in town and couldn't be here. She showed good sense in not staying for them since they never did show up. They called about 9:45 Saturday night to say they would be here this morning at 9 and they did, indeed, appear this morning but somewhat after 10. The Fletchers are lovely people in many respects but they have always been like that so far as Melrose appointments are concerned.

One of the unexpected, or rather one of the curious things happening over the weekend took place on Saturday morning at The Enterprise office when a man, thought to be in some way connected with the Government, dropped in to order several copies of Thursday's issue, --he specified the one bearing the Cane River Memo about mid term elections, and one copy each was to be sent to several people, of of the said people being Drew Pierson, of all people. The first word coming to mind, of course is why. Perhaps D. Pierson draws some of his material from columnists around and about but I can't imagine anything in that column that would interest anybody.

James called this afternoon. He said, hadn't had a good night and accordingly they were not coming down on this Sabbath. James said he had been down on this way this morning but had not dropped in because, after spending a little time doing some work at the camp, he had discovered time was running along and he wanted to get back home to turn off an electric heater. I assume Kay was sleeping.



12054

I got a round to do a little reading and in some unexpected text ran across a reference to Halley's Comet as having appeared in 1758. It recalled to mind some diggings I had made when a child in ancient diaries, letters and the like, starting my diggings by figuring back what years the comet had made its rounds. As I recalled, it was about every 75 years. On checking on this timetable, however, I discovered that the comet does not complete its orbit on a precise schedule. As a matter of fact, the 1758 date, as mentioned in the book I was reading proved to be incorrect for it seems that actually the comet didn't make its round until the spring of 1759, and the pattern it follows is to make the orbit either in 75 years, 76 years and 77 years, although I am not sure in that order, after which it reverts to whatever of these three time lengths comes next. I don't see how this fact can be of the slightest interest to anyone but I gather my research in seeking references by contemporary writers might have been speeded considerably, had I known about this variation every time around. I remember there was quite a stir on the 1682 go-round because lots of people were writing letters, keeping journals and what not in that year. I remember there was quite a flurry during the Renaissance, --the Italian,-- but I don't recall the date, probably in the 1470's or 1480's. It's only appearance thus far in the 20th century was in 1910 and will return again in this century either in 1985, 1986 or 1987, however the schedule is geared for the next visit.

I heard Rex Chaplain's voice last night for the first time in quite a while. She was at Tessie Millspah's and had been trying unsuccessfully to get Celeste on the phone and so ended up by calling me to ask if I would ask Celeste to call her. The hour was sort of 9 o'clock-ish. I hung up and dialed Celeste whom I got readily enough and today Celeste told me she completed the circuit without any difficulty. I learned today that two people from town had tried to call me last night without any luck so I take it the party line is playing tricks on the subscribers again.

And now I must knock off a column and then call it a day.....

12055

Monday, October 22nd, 1962.

Memorandum;

Fair and cool.

All the news tonight revolves about the President's speech announcing an embargo on Cuba. If memory serves, an embargo pre-supposes a state of war to exist. The Soviet director has indicated so often that Cuba and the U.S.S.R. are buddies, each prepared to fight for the other, --imagine Cuba fighting for Russia, it would appear that either the Soviet Chairman or the American President is going to have to do a little back tracking.

Among the unimportant little sidelights of the President's day was the fact that he telephoned this morning the three living ex-Presidents, advising them of what he planned to cover in tonight's move. The fact that he felt moved to do this reminds me of an observation made or implied in a recent Cane River Memo, that once a man has breathed the rarefied air of the Presidency, he can never again occupy a space marked Ordinary Citizen.

I haven't heard any news following the President's speech except for 10 or 15 minutes immediately following it. Nobody I heard mentioned Berlin but it seems to me it is Berlin rather than Cuba where the trouble will be concentrated. I haven't a doubt that automatically Moscow will put a squeeze on Berlin and that is where the sparks will fly. Just as the United States can take Cuba any time she wants to, so Moscow can seal off Berlin any time she pleases, I suppose.

It is said Russian economy has its weak spots at the moment, especially in agriculture, and more than one rumpus has been started in times gone by when home difficulties impell those in power to beat the drum for a foreign squabble so that domestic shortcomings may be forgotten in a wave of super-patriotism.



12056

I must say that I have always been puzzled by Russia's seeming determination to get things the hard way in international matters. Immediately following the 2nd World War, Stalin obviously had in mind to get a lot of things which he probably could have secured with comparative ease had he not gone out of his way to rattle the sabre and push all the rest of the world into a panic about his intentions. If he had only played along with the major powers, it seems to me he could have secured his aims with comparative ease. I gather the present regime has had its heart set on rounding-up much of the Americas, especially to the south. I gather they were enjoying a measure of success in this line - endeavor by economic and political efforts. They simply couldn't resist the temptation, however, to start buddling military bases, seemingly with a view to threatening people into doing their will instead of sticking to their non-military infiltrations, if, indeed, one may say a Soviet policy ever pre-supposed anything of a non-military move, no matter what the guise. I don't see how Stalin was so determined to throw away so many tens of good will that he probably possessed as an ally at the close of the war. By the same token, I don't understand how the present Kremlin set insisted on making such a show of force in Cuba, ever step of which was certainly diminishing their chances of success in South America that was being penetrated without unusual nervousness.

But, then, of course, one doesn't have to wonder about the workings of mind across the sea when one can easily enough draw a blank when trying to figure out the mental operations of one's nearest neighbor as the individual and humanity as a whole blunders along on course that so often seem more guided by chance than design. Verily, Father Divine was so right: Peace, it's wonderful.....

12057

Tuesday, October 23rd, 1962.

Memorandum: Fair and cool.

There was plenty of ozone in the air and I responded by going around all day as fast as a dog chasing his tail but I don't seem to remember anything much accomplished. Oh, yes, I did re-build the bamboo fence in front of Ghana which wasn't much except to take up time. I had removed all the bamboo from that barrier last week and cut enough bamboo to make the new fence. As the bamboo is placed horizontally, however, it doesn't require too much material and it was accomplished in a short time. I put a couple of big nails in the top of each post and place the bamboo between the nails, thus avoiding splitting of the bamboo. As for the line running midway between the ground and the top of the post, I put big nails in the posts so that the bamboo rests on it and also avoids the splitting that would result if the bamboo were actually nailed to the post. This method provides adequate support for the bamboo so that the gourds, a group of them sometimes weighing two or three hundred pounds, remains well off the ground and the fence never sags, thanks to the stoutness of the bamboo.

The circle in the center of the hana remains fresh and wonderfully colorful, what with the abundance of the second growth of zinnias, sweet basil and sage but the thermometer is beginning to say into the 40's, suggesting that a frost can't be too far in the offing and one of these days Jack Frost will make his initial round and the color in the vegetable garden will be gone for 1962.

In anticipation of the frost, I cut down some of the taller banana plants along the Yucca gallery where ever their great leave, sometimes 8 or 10



12058

feet in length will get entangled with telephone and electric wires when the seasonal sag begins, a move made at this time that will facilitate removal of the bananas when cutting down time arrives.

Twice today people passing this way have expressed amazement and delight with the size and beauty of the big red apple I have on the little end table along side the sofa in the living room. I must say I never saw a bigger redder one but in every expression of astonishment, people have to be enlightened on the score that while the big red apple is magnificent, in retality it isn't an apple at all but merely one of the belle peppers I used in the vegetable arrangements during pilgrimage.

Along about 3:30 my work was interrupted when Dr. Talley, the lady doctor from New Orleans, dropped in to say howdy. She had much to tell me about her European tour and I was delighted to hear everything. The place she would like to return for a quiet, leisurely season is Florence. She could spend more time in Rome, years to visit Vienna which she missed, and doesn't every have to return to Spain or Portugal. She would like a leisurely spring or summer in Ile de France where she fell in love with the Chartres neighborhood.

She was thunderstruck at the manners of some of the people attending the world medical meeting in Lisbon. She said the food was uncertain and she was quite unprepared for the manners of some of the people, as, for example, a lady picking up a roast from a buffet at a reception and attacking it in the manner of Henry VIII and then putting it back on the platter.

She loves the lower Rhine area and thought how pleasant it would be to spend some time in one of the many little charming inns in that area which she saw but did not stay in, as she was traveling with a numerous medical company.

And now I must get busy and do some work but should much prefer chatting with little Miss Lee.....

12059

Wednesday, October 24th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and cool. Mrs. Genung reported seeing frost on her lawn in Hatchiteches. I didn't see any evidence of same down this way. I was impressed by a radio report that Kansas City and Anchorage, Alaska, had the same thermometer readings and that Chicago was even colder. We are promised a low of 42 for tonight and from where I sit, the promise appears reasonable enough.

James came to see me this afternoon. He reported I. S. Willard had come to see Kay in Pecan Park a day or two ago. She mentioned on her arrival that she had turned her ankle on her steps when leaving home. The ankle increased in pain during her visit and she proceeded to the hospital where the lady doctor chanced to be. X-ray pictures showed no broken bones. One assumes a tendon has been stretched. I believe I. S. W. remained at the hospital for a night and perhaps a day. I shall give her a buzz later tonight when respectable people on this party line will have folded up.

One of the town banks, perhaps the Exchange, celebrated its 70th birthday or some such. I believe there was a dinner or some such at the Broadmore restaurant. According to mine hostess at coffee time, R. B. showed movies and slides of their August jaunt and the commentary was by his wife and the commentary was said to be just grand. I know not if this implied the pictures weren't up to snuff or not.

In yesterday's envelope, I enclosed one of Regan's usual post scripts to her Hatchez Trace form letter.



12060

It contained news that I passed on to James,-- the reference to Alice having moved from New Orleans to her old home in Metairie and the news that Mary and Herbert Roads aren't happy in Metairie. In regard to Herbert and Mary, nobody except Herbert and Mary ever thought they would be. Obviously it is well that not too many people are ever given an opportunity to run other people's business for them but never do I remember feeling more strongly a desire to try to persuade Mary and Herbert from making the move they did.

It only came to mind while talking to James about Alice that I never heard anybody say and that I never inquired whence came Richard, Alice's husband. James said he could remember him as having occupying a room in a house next to the John Martins and that in those long ago days, Richard would have been the last person to carry off the palm in a beauty contest. He said his hair was fire red and that his face was as unfortunately formed and somehow resembling that of Sinclair, --Lewis Sinclair, who certain did not have beauty included in his many other gifts. James said that when last he had seen Richard at the Graham home in New Orleans, Richard's hair was still the same fiery red but the amount he possessed had been vastly reduced so that it now is more like a fringe around the back of his head. Verily Alice could never have married Richard for beauty.

James had one wonderful idea for somebody to carry out in the department of play writing. The story would be centered on a trial, sort of a case of Mary Duggan type frthing but all the rest would be so different. The whole business would center on the heroine, a lady based on I. S. Willard and once she had got on the stand, she would so confuse the prosecuting attorneys, the judge and jury and she would tangent them off in her testimony until they were all under the chairs and tables and the prosecuted lady would be prayed to accept her acquittal if she would only stop talking and leave the Court.....

12061

Thursday, October 25th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and cold with a frost almost inevitable tonight.

Having bravely begun with a single sentence, I had to pause to answer the phone, --I. S. Willard. She says she is feeling fine, is wearing a rubber bandage on her ankle and is able to mosey about, drive her car and so on. She is quite enchanted with the lady doctor whose services she is using for the first time. I know not who her doctor has been all these years but it does seem remarkable that she has not had occasion to do business with a lady she must have known for years and year and seems to like so much.

She wanted to talk about the Cuban situation and how long I thought it would obtain. It seems her son, Dan, had just returned from California on Monday, I believe, and was thinking of giving up his naval career to accept some kind of a job with some California concern, --airplanes or some such, I imagine. The job must have been promising to impell him to consider giving up the navy after all these years, not to mention the fact that his father-in-law is an Admiral so that both husband and wife must be accustomed to Navy ways. But now that the crisis has arrived and Defense jobs all up and down the line are probably frozen for the duration, the Willards are understandably wondering what will be next and when.

Today's Enterprise carries an excellent likeness of Dr. Knipmeyer. Until he read it to me, I did 't know that his son, Bob, is currently living in Dayton, Ohio for the last time I heard of Bob and family they were in California. Bob is with R. C. A. and I suppose R. C. A. is all over the place, including Dayton.



12062

You will also note in this week's issue a likeness of the three tiles, under which appears the Cane River Memo on the subject of the local tiles. I wish the cotton crucifixion had been placed in the middle instead of at the end of the three likenesses. The column itself is of no interest and as You may gather from the first sentence, it was stirred up not for regular readers but with a view of being used at some time or other for tile promotion in communities that never heard of the Cane River country.

Although the sun was bright today, it didn't transmit sufficient warmth to cut through the chilly wind out of the northeast but I stuck to trellis building. I learned at supper Mr. and Mrs. Shaw of Austin had come to see me this afternoon, stopping at the store to ask if I was at home. They were told I was and to invade the gardens but as I never saw them, I conclude they didn't get as far as the gourd garden in their tour of exploration. The clerk reported that Mr. Shaw had stated he and his wife are very fond of me and regretted being unable to find me. I am glad the clerk did 't send an Ethiopian to track me down for I wanted to get the work done I had started and I have never met the Shaws but once and while they are undoubtedly very fine people as bankers go, I suspect Mr. Shaw of being a bigot of the first water and feel no vast magnetic pull in that direction.

Tonight's radio mentions John Steinbeck as get this year's Nobel Prize. Verily, nothing succeeds like success. I think everyone must agree he is one of America's outstanding writers and I can't imagine anybody complaining about the award.

Celeste and J. H. went to New Orleans today and so I am pretty much alone on the plantation tonight, except for a few hundred other people, of course being scattered about in cabins up and down the road. J. H. flies back tomorrow and I believe Celeste returns this weekend, planning to heard out for Mansura or Marksville midweek for All Saint's Day.....

12063

Friday, October 26th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold. The radio speaks of 10 inches of snow in West Virginia and snow in upState New York. I hope there isn't any in Lyme. We were supposed to get a frost last night but cloud converage developed and Jack Frost failed to put in an appearance. He can keep right on doing that without any objection on my part.

Carmen told me today that Thelma is in Houma, Thelma's home town, in South Louisiana. John told some visitors yesterday that Thelma was in a hospital for some sort of a delicate auditory operation. When I talked with Thelma on the phone on Monday, she mentioned she and John might be going to Hot Springs this weekend to haul back some drinking water as neither of them like the Hatchiteches water. One or two people have asked me to inquire from John where his wife is but I have declined. After all, if a lady wants to withdraw from the usual hurly-burly for an off-the-record session, I think her wishes should be respected.

I was pleased when James appeared on my doorstep 10 minutes before noon dinner time. We awaited the arrival of the clerk to join in a glass of port and we were all happy to find J. H. at the big house for dinner. I assume Celeste will be home on the morrow.

J. H. reminded me of an automotive vehicle whose engine was racing a mile a minute but being temporarily out of gear, remained stationary. There were so many topics to talk about, plantation operation mostly, some current events, R. E. A. and Irby Nett was also gracing the board and J. H. was jumping from topic to topic and at the same time consuming feed a mile a minute and eating things like roast pork which is banned from Celeste's table but which is worked on over time at the big house. I can but wonder at the pace he maintains, --wonder and regret.

James asked me to go over to the camp with him after



63031

12064

dinner and I did for an hour and found it very pleasant there. He had several Hunter canvases he wanted me to see and I found all of them remarkable and to my liking. He said he had seen the artist this morning and found her in gay mood. He remarked upon a new wrist watch she was wearing, replacing the one she had worn before. The former one didn't work very well after she remembered, after she had finished some laundry, that she had forgotten to take it off when splashing her arms around in the soap suds. She said she had sold her no account watch to Delores, her granddaughter. And speaking of Delores reminds me to report that one day last week Frankie-Ray staid home from school because a yellow jacket stung his sister, Delores. Smile.

James reported that Aunt Willie is scheduled to make a hop from The Bluff to New Orleans on November 17th and after a few days there, she will journey on to Morgan City. Kay will run down to New Orleans to meet her when she arrives and probably stay with her. It is expected both ladies will journey on to the oldest town in the Louisiana Purchase after the Morgan City visit. I believe James contemplates the visit with about the same misgivings that I experience when I learn of a Shreveport visit to this bend of the river.

I. S. Willard just called. She wanted to tell me all about a job she is having done by way of raising a few feet of sidewalk leading to her house and the widening of the step in front of her door and, by golly, she did. Of course there were tangents throughout the sidewalk story, --jaunts to Bardstown, Marseilles, Baton Rouge and so on but we finally got the tale unfolded. The most interesting detail I listened to had to do with the contractor who is doing the work, a man with ten children, seven of whom have finished school but the contractor himself had failed to finish high school and so he is now doing that at night and the three youngest children can help him with his homework.....

12065

Sunday, October 28th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and cool.

Saturday's post brought another lovely floral card from Lyme to make my heart glad. How well do I appreciate the pressures precluding correspondence and I continue my plea that we lean heavily on mental telepathy until things ease off a bit.

I found it such a happy coincidence that little Miss Lee should have chanced on Cane River scenes on the same day that Lestan was participating in receiving guests, so many of whom were viewing the Cane River countryside for the first time.

I saw my neighbor across the fence briefly on Saturday morning. She reported much delight with her New Orleans interlude. I had to pass that way, --across the fence, not New Orleans, in the afternoon, but she was in town, I reckon. It was a pleasure to dine alone with J. H. this noon, his lady having decided to go on a frolic to Shreveport with some of her girl friends. I forgot to ask her when she is taking off for All Saints and All Souls but I reckon that will not be for another day or two. If some national organization ever sponsors a contest wherein people are invited to submit nominees for the most continuing road running, it seems to me I ought to aspire to win something, were I to offer a name.

I had quite a chat last night on the 'phone with I. S. Willard. Kay had spent the afternoon with her and some of the Carvers had dropped in and it was all pretty darling, I gathered. I. S. W. reports the work on her steps and walk leading to her house goes forward. She confided that Aunt Willie will be coming to Hatchitchees following



12066

her visit to New Orleans and Morgan City, scheduled for November 17th and that during her stay in Natchitoches Aunt Willie and Mrs. Crabtree will be guests of I. S. Willard. I take it that this is what the rush is all about in getting the new level on the steps and the walk approaching the house is all about. I have heard of no tentative date set for the Natchitoches arrival but I assume it may well be on or after December 1st and the turning on of the lights. Just as I was utterly at a loss when Kay urged Kay to assume the role of hostess during Pilgrimage, so I am equally floored that Kay would think of permitting Aunt Willie and Mrs. Crabtree staying with I. S. Willard. I have no doubt I. S. Willard issued the invitation convincingly but Kay should have insisted on a hotel or motel where circumstances are geared for guests. My guess is that James probably doesn't know anything about the preparations for rolling out the red carpet at the Willard menage but he will find out soon enough. I. S. Willard, when telling me of Aunt Willie's plans to visit Louisiana, asked me to let Kay or James tell me about it so that it wouldn't appear I knew about it. Well, I knew about it but I didn't have an official program for the Natchitoches sojourn and the plans for using the Willard establishment for use as a base strikes me as being quite as wacky as some other things bubbling up in that quarter on other occasions.

The man who usually does work for James about the camp on weekends reported that James was expected at the camp this morning but did not appear. This is the first Sunday since the Registers moved to Natchitoches I haven't heard from them. Perhaps coming events pertaining to the visit are casting their shadows before. So turneth the wheels in the Cane River. I held the thought it may have been a peaceful weekend in Lyme.....

12067

Monday, October 29th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and a little warmer with an occasional gleam of sunshine and much stars tonight.

I had planned lots of things for today and achieved not so much as a start on most of them. Well, tomorrow may be another day.

The morning got gummed up at the beginning by pecan duties calling all good men and true on whom I had counted to give me a hand at moving some trees. Then a messenger arrived from the store bearing a verbal message from the merchant-planter, advising that some people he had met, --I think it was a said a man whom he had met in -- the next work I couldn't ever unravel from the messengers twist of the thing, --was heading this way and would arrive in 40 minutes. I wish I could remember how the messenger spoke that word which, as I learned when I appeared at the store 40 minutes later, was Alaska.

Some gentleman whom J. H. met when in Fairbanks of the Forty-night State, was about to appear. That was a little after 9 and the man did indeed pull into view at precisely 11:05. But as things are never quite what they seem before hand, the gentleman not only present himself but two cars full of ladies and gentlemen, with both Alaska and Louisiana being represented. J. H. whisked the man off to observe freshly ploughed cotton fields and pecan groves while I took on everybody else. I liked the people but was provoked at their failure to keep their appointment and so gave them a whiz around that made their respective skirts and pants snap.

At 2 o'clock, so J. H. whispered in my ear, some Texans were supposed to turn up. They did, about five ladies, I believe. Well, I gave them a pretty fast tour, too, because James had come 10 minutes before 2 and I wanted to talk with him a bit and so he waited. Something happened in the African



12068

house when the five ladies and I arrived there that was certainly unexpected. I waded them to the upper floor to observe the Hunter murals, letting them go ahead of me. When all of us were on the stairs, the procession stopped for a minute or two but I did not know why. Eventually we all made the grade and the ladies seemed to have avoided the center of the room but nobody seemed other than casual. Then one lady, realizing I might be unable to notice it, pointed to a Mr. McGrew in the middle of the matting and asked if it was considered dangerous. Heyn Mr. McGrew began moving toward the stairs and bland I said to her although I couldn't tell if it was my old neighbor, the King snake or some other. What surprises me is that all the ladies took the matter so matter-of-factly and nobody screamed or shouted or fainted or ran but simply proceeded calmly and with as much non-chalance as the unexpected presence departed.

James said nothing about yesterday and didn't refer to domestic matters except to present me with a couple of loaves of home made bread, an apple pie, baked by Kay's own hands, some jellies and a slab of cheese.

What I wanted to talk with James about was a visit I want to make to the blacksmith shop in town of Isaiah Jones, a negro who is said to be real adept with forge, hammer and anvil. He wears glasses, I am told, has gray hair and, according to Ezra, is secretary to the Masonic Lodge to which Ezra belongs. From whence I cannot say but somehow I have an intuition that Isaiah Jones,-- what a wonderful name for a blacksmith who, I forget to say, is also a preacher on occasion,--that Isaiah Jones may well have some gift or other undeveloped as yet, perhaps something in the world of iron mangers that is akin to the aptitude of the local artist with a paint brush. And so I want to go and see Isaiah Jones to see if the soil is favorable for seed planting and eventual flowering. Too many people I know, such as Thelma, are forever going all the way to winnfield to get their iron work done. Perhaps if I write an article about Isaiah Jones, local readers may welcome an opportunity to handle iron transactions locally and perhaps I. J. would welcome some additional business. Then, too, I want to see if I. J. is capable of copying some ante bellum wrought iron things such as andirons, fireplace poker, hinges, brackets and so on. James is delighted with the prospect of going to see the forge and I am impatient to see what, if anything, can be done to give Isaiah, the same push toward comparative affluence currently being enjoyed by Clementine, the painter. Lordy, Lord, how much there is to be unwrapped and set going.....

12069

Memorandum: Tuesday, October 30th, 1962.

Cloudy and chilly.

I was delighted to discover a dandy letter from Lynn in today's post. I shiver to think of snow in that area. It is good that rain followed in its wake and so eradicated it before it really took hold. There certainly are places in this world where snow seems to made for the landscape but neither Lyme nor this bend of the river are in that bracket.

I am so appreciate of your kindness in sending me the clipping about Sylvia Beech of whose death I had not learned. It is curious that I never knew before that she descended from a long line of Presbyterians and especially so as I recall discussing eminent American Presbyterians of Princeton in a cozy corner of Shakespeare and Company, with Sylvia pouring tea and constantly darting back and forth from the tea pot on one side of the table to get around to the other end to tuck a shawl a little closer around the neck of James Joyce.. That must have been in the early 1920's, a winter which I recall as having been rather mild in Paris,--mild, that is, so far as an absence of snow goes although the humidity is deceptive enough to freeze one when it is chilly without one sensing one is cold until one pauses to take stock of things. It is pleasant to recall how often at the little restaurant near Pettit Venice, hard by the beginning of the Grand Canal at Versaille, where as soon as one was seated, someone would bring hot bricks,--always 2 in number,--one for each foot, adjusting them to suit each customer. And in saying that, I am reminded for the first time since then of the jokes a friend of mind made when the chasseur brought the customary two bricks for my companion who had lost one leg in the war.

And now that Sylvia Beech has joined Gertrude Stein in the Great Beyond, Alice Toklas in eclipse and Mrs. Roosevelt precariously ill, one is



12070

made conscious of the end of an epoch and made sad by  
the losses in brighter intellects who, in their  
respective ways kept the candles of civilization  
alight when often there was too much darkness.

Yesterday's radio reported that Mrs. Roosevelt, although  
gravely ill, was holding her own. In view of her  
prolonged illness and removal from the hospital to  
home, holding her own isn't enough to give one much hope  
for at her age one usually must go forward or backward  
and merely standing still too often indicates retreat rather  
than advance. I shall always be grateful to God that  
I could live for a generation when a great soul like  
Mrs. Roosevelt's was inspiring men of good will the world  
around by the nobility of her character.

From the attached clipping, you will already have learned  
of the destruction of Wood Hill Farm. 1862 will be  
long remembered by the Stirlings as an eventful one, --  
the burning of their home, their European trip, --  
their first, and probably their first grandchild for  
I think their daughter expects an heir in November. I  
am certainly glad the fire did not occur while they were  
in Europe for probably, by being at Wood Hill Farm,  
they were probably able to save many a treasure that  
might otherwise have been lost.

James dropped in this afternoon, reporting that he had  
investigated the blacksmith situation in Hatchitoches  
on my behalf and from what he reports, it appears that  
there are two, -- Isaiah Jones, as mentioned  
yesterday, who seems to be a mulatto, and Charles  
Jackson, a negro. Isaiah has mechanical equipment  
while Charles leans more heavily on his own brawn.  
I think I shall run in to town on Thursday afternoon and  
visit both smithies. I hope I can do something  
by way of turning Parish business in their direction.  
Isaiah, the mulatto, stated that he read Cane River  
Memo which puzzles me. Charlie is more "ageable",  
it is said, and as he possibly doesn't read and, I gather,  
probably does more by hand than machine, is likely to  
be more of a craftsman but we shall see.

So much to chatter about but the end of this page  
impells me to stop and get to doing some work.....

Mrs. R.  
Died Nov 8  
6:15 PM.

12071

Wednesday, October 31st, litq.

Memorandum: Clear and cool, a high of about 54 and

possibly a light frost tonight. I don't  
know if hob-goblins prefer cloudy nights or not but if  
they chance to like star-spangled heavens, they most  
certain have them tonight.

I get a mild laugh at my own ignorance this morning  
and any day that will afford one a chance to laugh  
at one's self can't be entirely wasted. One  
awakening, a couple of ideas passed through my mind, --  
one about Catholic administration on the Parish level, the other  
on a Vatican level. I thought I would pass these  
thoughts along to Bishop Greco to act on or not as he pleased.  
Oddly enough, when I turned on the radio to get the early news cast,  
I learned that the aforesaid "El" Greco had been appointed to  
some committee or other on the Council currently  
sitting in Rome. As it is said "El" Greco has an inside track  
around the Vatican, I thought it might be especially helpful  
if he were given the idea on one of his brief trips  
in and out of Alexandria. Surely the Catholic Church in  
town would know about his plans for American appearances and  
so I phoned that institution in due time and had a nice  
little chat with somebody, perhaps Father Cuvian or however that gentler  
spells his name. He was cordiality itself and said that  
the good Bishop would indeed be making around,  
perhaps two rounds, before Christmas. I asked if he could  
give me any precise date. He said he could and that  
the Bishop would surely be here for Advent. "Oh" was  
my bright response, "Advent, you say". I was  
assured that was correct and after an exchange of amenities, the  
conversation was concluded. As I have no more idea than  
the man in the moon when Advent may be, I was just as  
much in the dark as before. I shall call an  
Episcoplain reverend on the morrow for I reckon he is up on  
such matters.

Carmen called me this morning to gossip but I had not time.



12072

She said Thelma had just called her to say that nobody in town knew it but that she, Thelma, had been in New Orleans over the weekend to have an ear operation. Carmen had told me last week Thelma was in Houma to see about the old family home. I again said "Oh" to Carmen's report although I had known about the operation when Carmen was telling me about the Houma thing. Carmen is such an invaluable phone pal since she is bubbling over with news at all times and dying to tell it. What's even better, she never seems to notice it if nobody has anything to offer her. In short, Carmen is pure blue-jay and both dog and bird can be quite useful if one knows how to listen.

It is pleasant to report that all the feathered friends around and about are apparently in fine physical shape. The white peacock is becoming the tamest of that group. I know not if this be out of a natural inclination to establish friendship or if it is simply she is more hungry than her pals of color. Be that as it may, she is always right up in front and has learned that I am likely to still have extra tid-bits when I move from the peacock-guinea-white rabbit department to the geese-pheasants section and, unlike her pals, she leaves them flat with their corn and their bread and never fails to follow me on to the Unicorn House where she does indeed usually get something extra.

I get a request from a teacher today, asking she be permitted to bring 30 or 40 students to look over the place. The majority of the children are in the 3rd and 4th grades, she explained. It would certainly be a chance for the youngsters to frolic but I haven't much belief that ones of such tender years could get much more than a frolic out of such a visitation... I suppose the teacher knew well enough that I had nothing to do and therefore it would do no harm for her to try to make the front gate, --no harm for her at least.

It is always nice hearing from Helen and as you will note from the enclosure, the doings of little Miss Carolyn follow along about the usual pattern. Where she will come back into focus again is anybody's guess, --South America, Africa, the moon, --the Lord only knows.....

12073

Thursday, November 1st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and pleasantly moderate, a brilliant sun all day and a waxing moon wading through a few clouds tonight.

The big question before the house is where in the world did October go and withal in such speed.

So far as I know, the Halloween sprites weren't so very active last night. There was one dab of outrageous conduct but even that one tended to backfire. Some mulatto teen agers from town and from across the river descended on the local henkey-tonk where they thought they spotted a car belonging to a former mulatto Parish resident. They cut all four tires. It turned out that the car did come from Houston but belonged to Kurt Hachette, a former Melrose resident, a resident of Houston for the past several years, who chanced to be vacationing here with his family. A crowd of the mulatto youths who had appeared at the henkey-tonk last night were picked up and jailed today, all of them apparently non-plussed on learning the car they damaged belonged to somebody they didn't know instead of to the person on whom they had supposed they were playing a costly prank, --costly for the pranksters before they are finished with it.

This was the day I went to town where I broke bread at 11:30 with James at the Town House, after which we drove to the Charles Jackson blacksmith shop. A couple of gentlemen of color were taking their ease in the sunshine and reported Charlie had gone somewhere to do some blacksmithing. And so we drove on to Josiah Jones' blacksmith shop, at the end of a deadend street, effectly blocked off by the railroad tracks, higher than the roofs of the little cabins down this pleasant Catfish Row. One little cabin was noted in particular because it had flourishing in its tiny yard about a dozen huge candelabra bushes, --plants usually costing \$1.50 each and never found in the confines of any property except the more expansive ones owned by garden lovers sufficiently affluent to take a chance on such delicate



87051

12074

plants. I thought of the same bushes in Celeste's garden, none of which have ever put forth a blossom and these at Ghana that are no more luxuriant than those noted on this poor be-draggled little old hidden-away street.

I found Isaiah Jones, like many a mulatto, looking like a white man with a fine sunburn or sun tan. Stuff was helter-skelter all over his place and he apparently knew where ever piece of iron could be found and he brought forth several. He lacks the colorfulness of the negro but conveyed their usual consideration toward strangers. I cannot write a column about him because the points I would stress would not be helpful. For instance, as a talking point, I took with me an S shaped gadget of ante bellum dating, designed to hold back shutters or doors, as the S shaped metal is on a swivel in the middle, -- an old nail or some such, so that the S may be kept in a horizontal position to hold back the shutter or whatever. Isaiah said he could make me a pair like the sample, pounded out by hand, for a dollar, -- a job that would take him at least a day in his hand-wrought method. I ordered a pair but adjusted the price more to my own piece of mind. I asked him about doing a triten such as Neptune-carries, for managing legs in the fireplace. I expected him to charge about 10 or 12 dollars. He quoted me three dollars.. It's a stunning experience to encounter people in this day making one feel shame-faced for them because they charge one too little.

This was the salient point that impressed me about Josiah and I will not put it in a column since I know too many people who think it smart to rush in where ever they can to get some body to do some work for them at a starvation price. I believe, however, I can find other means to throw business in Isaiah's direction.

Afterward, we dropped in at Millspaugh's, looked at a couple of new banks I hadn't seen before, inspected the Cathedral and the Episcopal Church and its new adjoining buildings, got flagged down on the street by Mildred Cunningham and her sister, Coralee Baker, and thence on to Pecan Park for a dish of ice cream with Kay who accompanied us back to Helrose but the Registers did not get out when we arrived. And so my unique adventure of finding myself in town panned out and I'm mighty happy to find myself back in the country tonight.....

87051

12075

Friday, November 2nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and cool.

I welcomed the sunshine to temper the somewhat chilly winds for I wanted to spend the better part of my day working on the bamboo trellises and I am delighted to report the job is just about wrapped up although most of the work was done by a helper since my day was too much gummed up by Elderade people in the morning and a caller and domestic chores in the afternoon.

The Elderade people were pleasant and were acquainted with Ann of the Chamber of Commerce. Did I mention that she was in Ireland for a vacation this summer.

This afternoon James dropped in. After leaving here, they drove to the camp and at supper Dereatha told me Kay was driving the car when they quitted the place. It seems that when they reached the public road, heading toward Montrose, Kay headed slap in the direction of the end of the balustrade at the end of the bridge. James called out in time for her to correct her error. When they approached the Bayou Brevelle bridge, the same thing happened and James assumed coordination was slow or something. When they reached the main highway, -- Route No. 1, Kay stopped the car and said she wasn't going to drive any further in being thus yelled at. I don't know if I remarked last night that I had found her rather below par in the afternoon when we dropped by the house. The tenderness James has for her is touching and I can but marvel he sustains it so wonderfully.

I got a sidelight on Aunt Willie's visit to Hatchitoches during this afternoon's conversation. It seems Kay and I. S. Willard settled the matter about where she would stay without telling anyone. As I understand it, the main floor is being rented for two or three weeks for Aunt Willie's use and that of Mrs. Crabtree. If I. S. Willard is in town, she will occupy the upper floor. James seemed to be taking the words right out of my mouth when he remarked he thought the arrangement odd in the extreme, since there are steps to be negotiated to get to



12076

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the main floor of the house, steps probably difficult for Aunt Willie and always hazardous for Kay. A suite at the hotel with windows overlooking Cane River or two or three rooms, if desired, at the motel, could have provided such simpler and probably more satisfactory arrangements. One can but wonder at it all.

Something was said about 85 thousand dollars might have been saved on income tax if things had been properly set up some time back but, oddly enough, both Kay and her lawyer seem to prefer the remarkably high tax drains to taking advantage of less might ones.

Present plans call for Kay to fly from Natchitoches to Franklin or Morgan City or some such place in south Louisiana next week about the 8th. She will go over to New Orleans to meet Aunt Willie who is due in the Crescent City about the 12th, I believe. The Natchitoches visit of 2 or 3 weeks will begin around the 18th or 20th, at the conclusion of which Kay is expected to fly back to the Bluff with Aunt Willie and La Crabtree. I gather this Christmas is likely to shape up not unlike last year's.

I was quite taken aback this afternoon about 2 when answering the phone, I heard the voice of Clara Genung. She had gone to the hospital last night and Mrs. Walker told me the operation, removing the crushed bones from the end of one finger would be removed this morning. She was given sedation last night or early this morning and when coming back to consciousness, she--that is Mrs. Genung, was pleased to learn that the operation had been effected and here she was calling me from her hospital bed. She seemed gay enough, repeated herself once or twice and seemed in no hurry to go home but she will probably be back there on the morrow. Every time I think of the poor thing having been hung up there in her ice box at the time of the accident, I still shiver.

On the international front, I am still puzzled about the Koo-ba business, being quite incapable of understanding how and why the Soviet Director backed up with such speed. I am quite sure the jig isn't up by a long shot but I'm glad things have gone as promising thus far as they seem to. And here we are November and the first weekend upon us and may there be a vast amount of peace in Lyme.....

12077

12077

Sunday, November 4th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy Saturday and sunny today and both day's cold.

I had a couple of unexpected callers on Saturday morning. --Lee Vaccarini whose has some property across the river 2 or 3 miles below the Church. You may have seen some of her letters in years gone by, mostly from Chicago or Los Angeles. This was the first time we had ever met although she has been on the river occasionally. She brought a gentleman of color with her, a mulatto, I believe, from Cloutierville, but he was darker than most in that category. As for the lady herself, she is probably lighter than most white folks. She could remember the first Grandpere Augustin church that was taken down and replaced by the present one in 1917. She is rather tall and a little on the buxom side in sharp contrast to my concept of her from her letters as being short and lean. I walked with them to the front gate when they left and tentatively accepted her invitation to visit her at her house down the river some time. When they drove away, I went on to the store to pick up the mail where I found a letter from the lady, advising me she would call on me on Saturday morning as, indeed, she already had done.

The clerk drove to Baton Rouge with his wife and son on Saturday afternoon to see L. S. U. get trounced by Old Miss. He said his boy had developed a cold on Friday but the lady doctor had given him some medicine and said she thought it would be alright to go and freeze in a stadium from 7:30 until 10:45 on Saturday night.

With the clerk gone, J. H. and I supped alone and it was very pleasant. Celeste got in from South Louisiana sometime for I saw her at dinner and she reported having had a fine visit down yonder. What the program may be for this week, well, I, for one, couldn't possibly guess.



12078

The letter by J. H. Williams, published a week ago concerning a sales tax, has set the whole town buzzing. Because the Enterprise inclines to support the fight against the tax, Carmen naturally takes the other side in favor of same. Her jealousy of Mrs. Walker's ability as a newspaper editor impells her to the most inexcusable things. She seems to forget my connection with the paper and foolishly passes along the most outrageous statements to me. For example, she called me on Friday to say that a certain lady in town, --she didn't identify her, told Carmen that a friend of hers had seen a paper a while back covering a Communist meeting in Chicago, Milwaukee or some such place and that the Walkers were listed as participating in the meeting. I suppose the Smiths, Jones and everybody else attended. But Carmen, were she not so blinded by animosity, must have known that pinning it on the local Walkers was something made up out of whole cloth and I shouldn't be surprised if Carmen had made up the whole thing. She is forever getting after her acquaintances to cancel their subscriptions to the Enterprise and is equally busy trying to get business men to withhold advertising from the paper. Physically and mentally, Carmen at 72 seems remarkably preserved but this mania against the paper she once owned suggests a senility in serious discord with her other attributes. A while back, probably on a suggestion from Charles, she asked if I had ever thought about giving Cane River Memo to the other paper. I told her I doubted, --that was a lie, if Charles ever read my column and, for all I knew, he probably wouldn't be interested. Charles is quite right, of course, in not sticking out his neck by asking me if I would let him have the column. Sooner or later he probably will, however, and I am sure you can easily enough anticipate the nature of my response.

More letters arrived by Saturday's post requesting go-ahead gestures for a local pilgrimage on Sunday, December 2nd, following Saturday's hoop-la in town over the lights. There were two more such requests from New Orleans, one from Oklahoma City and one from Houston. Sometime back it was said Sister had taken a reservation at the hotel for Saturday night gathering and that she had invited the Baton Rouge kin folks. I can't imagine the latter appearing but I can envision too much Shreveport here by December 2nd. We don't need any of Oklahoma or Texas to add to the merriment.....

12079

Monday, November 5th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and chilly. We are promised a freeze tonight when the mercury is supposed to drop to 30. This afternoon about 4, however, it warmed up a little, offering the hope the freeze may be avoided. A fine fat moon is riding in a cloudless sky tonight and the absence of clouds suggests a Jack Frost visitation.

The ridiculousness of Louisiana Government will be manifest on the morrow, as on most elections, when the citizens of the State are expected to cast ballots for or against some 40 odd amendments. This is the craziest way of settling matters I know of. If, for example, some town nobody ever heard of somewhere in the Gulf Coast area or on the Arkansas border thinks it needs some civic improvement, by some twist of the Government, a Constitutional Amendment has to be submitted to the voters of the entire State. Probably few if any of the people living in the town in question has any idea about the matter, let alone people who never heard of the place. It's the cock-eyedest or cock-eyedest way of operating a Government anyone without much sense could think up. Some conscientious voters, --I might know one or two, pick out one or two Amendments by number before going to the poles and vote on them and don't even bother about the others so that good and bad amendments have about an equal chance to winning or losing. There is as much sense to the whole operation as though someone asked me to decide, Yes or No, if Terre del Fuego needed a new Dog Catcher, when I, for one, haven't the slightest notion where there are or are not any canine inhabitants of Terre del Fuego.

The better part of my morning was taken up with a very pleasant Mr. and Mrs. Kraft. I think they hail from Ohio. They were driving from New Orleans to Dallas and somehow discovered the existence of ye olde plantation from friends long before they left Ohio.

James dropped in this afternoon. He ran through many



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minor matters thereby bringing me up to date on same.  
On Thursday Kay mentioned she wouldn't be seeing me right away since she was flying from Natchitoches to South Louisiana early this week,-- perhaps she said Wednesday. Be that as it may, all that has been changed and she will not leave until another week has come and gone, or, on the other hand, she may leave on the morrow. One doesn't seem at all certain on such points from minute to minute.

I. S. Willard and Kay went for an afternoon drive Sunday afternoon. Late last night I. S. Willard mentioned on a telephone conversation with me that Kay liked a house on Williams Avenue a few houses from the Walkers. Kay finds the Pecan Park house they are renting too small which I can understand. Kay envisions a place where Aunt Willie can come to live. At 91, Aunt Willie isn't dreaming, of course, of living anywhere but The Bluff which Kay now owns. James opposes moving from the rented house which seems a little odd to me since I never liked Pecan Park to start with and should think he would prefer to own a home. I suppose the Aunt Willie image may have something to do with his position and have no doubt he feels that Kay, being far from well, would do better to let other people worry about local property. Possibly, too, he may feel a small house on a small lot requires less attention and poses less servant problems than a large place would require. From all this, I conclude that wealth does not necessarily guarantee peace of mind.

An interesting example as to how things really do move in the deep South is the make up of the entire staff handling the Melrose polling place on the morrow, everyone of the half dozen people being colored, including Zelma, Ezra and so on. Cousin Emmet ought to pass out on learning of such a state of things.....

12081

Tuesday, November 6th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and mild. The freeze, plunging down along the Rockies in this direction, did what it so frequently does, --hitting Fort Worth-Dallas and sliding from its southerly direction to an easterly one, chilling Tennessee and Georgia but leaving us unfrosted.

I am writing a little later than usual, having concentrated for a few hours on election returns. For some reason or other, partly atmospheric partly not, the best reception I could get was over the NBC Cincinnati station, WLW. I never could get the CBS New Orleans station WWL which was what I wanted.

I was glad Ted Kennedy won and I hope Massachusetts elected the Democratic aspirant for Governor. What impresses me most thus far in the reports is the fact that several State voters seem to have split their ballots which is usually a good sign since it suggests people are voting for candidates and not blindly supporting one or the other party. It appears, for example, that States like Pennsylvania and Oklahoma are electing a Governor of one party, a Senator of the other party. I haven't heard how Mr. Nixon is faring in California for thus far the votes seem pretty evenly divided between him and Governor Brown. As Mr. Nixon has never been my favorite political personality, I shall be the more pleased if Mr. Brown retains his Gubernatorial chair.

James dropped in to see me around 2 and paid me quite a visit. He brought the S's which Isaiah Jones had wrought for me. They are just perfect and I have a feeling Mr. Jones may well expect an upswing in his blacksmith business.

Kay had invited me to Thanksgiving dinner with her, James, Aunt Willie and I. S. Willard. I shall accept, of course. Counting in Mrs. Crabtree, Aunt Willie's nurse, we shall be six and that ought to



12081

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be just right. Such an assertion ought to put quite a strain on James and Mrs. Crabtree, what with Kay being in the condition she is, I. S. Willard, according to custom, being three or four hours late and with me being a little uncertain what I am attacking on my plate and Aunt Willie watching her diet. But with Mrs. Crabtree and James to look after us, I reckon we'll make it alright. Of course there is at least a fifty-fifty chance such a gathering may never assemble, what with Kay and Aunt Willie so often altering their travel plans so unexpectedly at the drop of a hat. Frankly, I should be just as happy if everyone "staid put" but I must not expect other people to relish the quiet of the home scene as much as I.

I got a good whack from that killer pheasant today,-- the male Lady Amherst. He attacks everybody except his wife and I often wonder how it is she can keep him in his place. When I went to feed them around 4:30 this afternoon, I held up a biscuit to break it in two so that each might have a go at the pieces without a scuffle. I suppose my hand was five feet above their heads. At precisely that moment, Louella tugged at my pant leg and as I glanced around to see what was biting her, the Amherst number shot up in the air to grab the biscuit, I suppose, and somehow ran one of his claws under the skin at the base of a finger nail. It bled copiously enough but for some reason remains wonderfully painful six or seven hours. I am puzzled the Lord has made so many male Lady Amhersts perhaps it is to make one appreciate the more the kindness of the Low Pauls and Louellas, the Toms and the Tom-toms.

Today's post brought a couple more letters from travel agents, --Lake Charles and Houston, asking if bus loads of people journeying to Hatchitoches to view the fireworks on the night of Saturday, December 1st, may visit this bend of the river on Sunday, December 2nd. In responding in the negative to all these, I suggest Hedges Gardens as a substitute. The Hedges establishment was just made for travel agents and I wasn't.....

12081

12083

Wednesday, November 7th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and mild.

Tonight I feel so close to Lymé. I suppose this is the same feeling lots of people are feeling tonight in regard to their respective Lymes since one naturally turns in thought toward those closest when a profound sadness weighs upon one's heart.

Half a dozen little chores, all unexpected, called for attention around first dark. Thanks to a waxing moon in a cloudless sky, I could accomplish whatever the several things it was I had to do out of doors. I was too late to get my regular news casts when I finally called it a day and came inside to see if I could catch a dab of news about the final election results which visitors this noon had prevented me from hearing. I thought a nice cold drink was just what I wanted before sitting down by the radio to see if I could find a news broadcast at a time I seldom listen. I turned on my radio to let the tubes warm up while I was scurrying around to get some ice out of the box in one end of the house and re-filling the tray at the other end of the place. In switching on the knob, I evidently turned it a little further than I had intended for sound began emerging shortly, a woman's voice giving a news cast in Spanish. I rushed on about my preparation of the drink, going back and forth through the room to the ones at the extreme ends of the house but suddenly stopped abruptly when it suddenly dawned on me that the woman had just announced in Spanish that "Sienora Roosevelt" had died.

I remember as though it were but yesterday all the circumstances obtaining around me when I learned of F.D. R's death on April 12th, 1945. I shall always remember just how things were tonight when I learned of the death of Mrs. Roosevelt's death.

A few people I know, --little Miss Lee, Miss Cammie, etc.,-- had the glorious luck to be able to appreciate Mrs. Roosevelt during her lifetime. Life will forever seem the better because of that.



12084

12084

James was awaiting me on my doorstep when I came from dinner this noon. Andy appeared at the same time and James sensed he was here to give me a hand and accordingly went over to the camp for a couple of hours, returning to spend a other hour later in the afternoon. At coffee this morning, Celeste reported that Dan's wife, June, had called her from town this morning to say she was coming down this afternoon to get some plants, --what kind of plants she didn't know. Celeste told her she was going to be in town. And so after James had made his first departure June arrived with a girl friend and that took up more time. In spite of these and other interruptions, however, I accomplished enough for a single afternoon.

Understandably, Mr. Nixon was vastly disappointed and it seems to me considerably puzzled in not having been elected Governor of California. I chanced on a recording of his press interview following his acknowledgement of Mr. Brown's victory. He spoke bitterly about the press having kicked him around. I know not if this is any foundation or not. Perhaps he has never suspected that so many people, probably including the gentlemen of the press, have so often thought him an opportunist and not, under strain, likely to declare that "there are occasions in politics when one has to rise above principals."

An hour intervenes as between this paragraph and the above. Mrs. Walker called from Cloutierville to say that she and Mrs. Chopin were attending a meeting there and thought to drop off to pay their respects enroute home if I would receive them at such an unsocial hour. I very much wanted to see Mrs. Chopin whose son had been killed in an auto accident a month or so back. And so they came and Mrs. Walker adroitly withdrew for a few moments so Mrs. Chopin and I could talk a little and then the ladies went on their way, after a glass of port.

Thus endeth as November Day I shall long remember, filled with gratitude to God as I am for having provided me with the inspirations that are mine, thanks to Mrs. Roosevelt and little Miss Lee.....

12085

12085

Thursday, November 8th, 1962.

Memorandum: It sprinkled early this morning, perhaps around 2.

The clouds lingered on until 8 this morning when it cleared and got colder. Tonight the moon is magnificent and we are promised a frost before morning.

It was grand finding a message from Lyme in today's post. It is grand having the clippings, too, and I'm doubly appreciative of your thoughtfulness in letting me know about our favorite Saint for I had heard nothing about his particular day.

I am especially enchanted to learn about the custom concerning Advent, the one candle for the first Sunday, the second for the second Sunday and so on until all four have been assembled and lighted. I think the custom charming and I am under the impression it is observed on both the east and west banks of the Rhine although I recall the matter but vaguely and should have remembered it not at all, had you not described it so delightfully.

My Thursday morning friends mentioned today that they journeyed over to Hedges Gardens yesterday, taking with them a couple of their grandchildren, --a little girl of 5 and the latter's smaller brother, along with a maid to look after them. My friends were seated somewhere on a bench in the garden while the children frisked about when a lady approached them, started to explain her identity when the good doctor's wife exclaimed:

"Why.....Carolyn....."

It seems Miss Ramsey was turning a film for next season. It will probably be called "Fall Fantasies". She was hoping to incorporate the youngsters into the film and before any of them knew what they were up to, the camera was flying and some delightful shots were taken, it is said. My friends had taken a picnic lunch with them and invited the Rocket to partake with them but she explained she had just



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broken bread with the master on his island. It is said: Carolyn looks just fine and is as charming as ever.

I listened to an NBC tribute to Mrs. Roosevelt tonight and thought it excellent. One of these nights I shall attempt a column which will sound old hat enough when, if I write it, it gets into print a couple of weeks hence when all readers will probably have had enough of eulogies on this particular character.

In passing, I was impressed by the difficulties the writers of any scripts must experience in making errors. Tonight, for example, in the NBC go-round, mention was made of the number of distinguished people she had received at her Hyde Park home in the post war years. The Emperor of Japan was included in the list which, unless I have been out-sleeping Rip van Winkle, must be an error which seems so impossible for such a news-gathering agency dealing with contemporary events.

Your observation concerning the present status of the butterfly lily blossoms is so true. Tonight's frost will undoubtedly finish off this year's crop. If mild weather should ensue, however, there may be some more later. I can think of no other plant that blooms so continuously over such an extended period, -- the third week in July until the first November, sometimes December frost. Since everyone seems to like them so much, it seems odd one so seldom runs across them but perhaps this is because the plants don't often find just the spot that pleases them. The last I knew, Celeste hadn't had a single flower this season and Blythe reported the same absence in her garden. How much easier to bear is the drabness of winter when one may look ahead down the corridor of time and glimpse in the mind's eye the butterfly lily awaiting one in the next July.....

12087

Friday, November 962.

Memorandum:

Fair and cool all day and tonight's moon wonderful.

I liked the daylight hours but the splintered segments in no way conformed to the pattern of work I had hoped to effect in one uninterrupted drive.

I found James waiting on my doorstep when I returned this noon from dinner. Needless to say my hopes for keeping up with the news flew out the window but we had a nice sitting and I found excellent the peppermint ice cream James brought. He and I got a good laugh out of my ineptitude when I started to dish us out some cream, slapping the first big dab right into an ash along side one of the dishes, after which I handed him the spoon to see if he could hit the bull's eye more adroitly than I and, I am delighted to report, he could.

I was glad to get a report on Dr. Oberdyke's findings of yesterday. James said the doctor found Kay just fine. When Kay pointed out some nights she couldn't sleep, the doctor said that was perfectly natural and part of the recuperation pattern. James thinks the doctor an excellent one. I doubt if a hypochondriac likes to hear such reports of progress, however.

After a while, James headed out for the camp, saying he would pause here again when he got ready to go back to town.

I made the most of freedom to jump into my afternoon program but Andy who was working for Celeste, came by to ask if he could get warm for a few minutes as he had become chilled washing leaves on the camelia bushes, each leaf of which has to be scrubbed on both sides.

The phone rang and Pat asked me if I would see a couple of men who are opening an antique shop in



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town. They wanted some advice from me and I think Pat favored that notion since I am under the impression he may be backing them.

Before they were gone, James arrived and so the afternoon was consumed and I had accomplished nothing I had anticipated doing.

According to a paragraph in the Shreveport Times, Mr. and Mrs. E. Lloyd Wenk, Jr., of Baton Rouge have been gotten a son, to be named John Lloyd Wenk. I believe the child was born on the 4th or 4th but Dr. Wenk obviously hadn't heard about it when he wrote J. H. on the 6th to thank J. H. for pecans sent him and to report that his son, Lloyd, got 93 in Astronomy in his L. S. U. course. Why Lloyd should be studying astronomy isn't clear to anybody I know of, including Lloyd.

One of today's visitors was the "atchiteches Post Master who chanced to remark that Monday will be a holiday to carry through the November 11th observance of Veteran's Day falling on Sunday this year. I realized I had better be-stir myself and get out some mail tonight since Tuesday's out-going mail will be too late for some things I had in mind to get going.

And speaking of the post, I was wondering about a fat envelope arriving today from the Times Picayune with no covering letter. It contained several copies of the Dixie-Rote magazine of several years back carrying a likeness of Leston on the cover and the illustrated article in color by the Rocket inside. Perhaps Warren chanced to run across them in some file or other and thought I might like them.

I held the thought Monday may be a holiday in Lym for I am sure little Miss Lee could appreciate wonderfully a momentary breather in the midst of all the current, post vacation doings.....

12089

Sunday, November 11th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Lovely, cloudless weather with brisk warm breezes. It was 82 here today and three radio stations have offered three figures for tonight's low, --Alexandria says 40, Hatchiteches, says 55, Shreveport says 65, and so one may take one's choice.

It was a busy weekend. Home-coming Day at the college brought "old grads" from far and near and many of them, of course, had to come to Melrose. These included Miss Maude Dunn, daughter of Dr. Milton Dunn who lived here in the 1920's, a lady and a gentleman I never met, Dr. D. having died before my time and Miss Maude seldom getting down this way. In another group, spearheaded by Mrs. Peel, represented even older "old grads", Madam Peel having graduated from Northwestern in 1899.

Andy dropped in to say J. H. told him he had had a letter from Andy's sister, Aurellia, Miss Cammie's maid, now living in Monroe. You may or may not recall that Aurellia married a white gentleman by or with the unlikely name of Ivy Lively. Well, it seems Mr. Ivy Lively has died and Aurellia has had what Andy pronounces as an "apparition", and is thinking about returning to Melrose to live. I think J. H. would like that because Celeste's servant is frequently out for a day or two or three and I suppose it would be nice having somebody to turn to and perhaps Aurellia has forgotten her declaration on the day she quitted service next door because Celeste slapped her.

In town last night some white boys around 1:30 this morning got into a scuffle with some colored boys and one white boy ended up by chunking a brick through the windshield of a car belonging to grocer Ward, an air force sergeant, retired, and at present operator of a grocery store and a man of excellent record as to citizenry, paying of bills and so on, an advertiser, it is said in The Enterprise. Be that as it may, Mr. Ward wasn't in the car at the time, --I know not who was, perhaps a son or nephew; and they went home and reported the damage and described the appearance of the chunker of the brick and Mr. Ward took down an ancient gun from the wall and started out. A youth, bearing the description of the brick chunker, was sighted at the scene and Mr. Ward fired, the youth, white, dropping dead. Then it developed the youth killed had just arrived on the scene, --a senior at Northwestern, but attired as the other youth had been. As Mr. Walker



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exclaimed when he 'phoned me about it: "Oh, dear! Oh, dear!"

At dinner, J. H. told me about the doings and said it was most lamentable since it will probably set off racial strife.

A little before 7 o'clock this morning, I. S. Willard called me to confide that Kay has signed papers, purchasing a property, two homes below the Walker residence on Williams Avenue, --the front on the avenue, the back, a deep garden, I believe, on the river. I believe the transaction was put through on Friday and James told about it on Saturday. James told me on Friday he was never going to move from the Pecan Park house. It is sufficiently small to preclude guests. Kay told I. S. Willard she wanted a house of her own and a place for Aunt Willie. I thought the opportunity excellent to stress two points, which I. S. W. could pass on to Kay, first, because Aunt Willie wants to remain at the Bluff, and, secondly, because it would be an impossible situation to try moving her to such a remote situation, so far from her long time friends and countryside. It is a mixup that is complicated by everyone being wrong and right, on one point or another. I told I. S. W. that this was a fine omelette falling to her and me to try to help unscramble and I think it quite a job.

I. S. W. said she and Kay were going riding this afternoon. I was on the gallery a little after 3 when my phone rang but by the time I reached it, the caller had gone. Thinking it might be James, asking if he might see me, I gave that Pecan Park number a buzz and got Kay. She had just been stirred herself from her bed, she said. She seemed to be bubbling over with gaiety and never breathed a word about the real estate matter. We talked about Aunt Willie and such like, Thanksgiving and so on. She didn't ask if I wanted to speak with James and I didn't ask to. I think Kay is misguided but genuinely convinced she ought to "mother" Aunt Willie. James, and quite correctly, thinks he should save Kay from the physical exhaustion which Aunt Willie always gets when she can sit on Kay. Kay thinks James is being mule-ish and unkind to her and so the thing spins. I was interested to learn from I. S. W. that she thinks Kay is jealous of the West Coast folks, possibly concerning both Aunt Willie and the latter's property. I didn't tell I. S. W. that Aunt Willie's property in large measure is now Kay's. To end the Willard conversation, I asked her if she had the correct time as I was underlain about my time piece. She said she could and that it was 8:20 but she thought her clock might be 10 or 15 minutes fast or slow but she wasn't sure which. That's I. S. W. Smile.

Lots more transpired over the weekend but this is sufficient to provide a sample. I only heard two minutes or less of a report on Mrs. Roosevelt's funeral. Perhaps I shall hear more tonight by delayed broadcast.....

12091

Monday, November 12th, 1962.

Memorandum: Ideal weather, all blue and gold during the day, and wonderfully silvered by tonight's moon.

I lingered a little longer than usual at the supper table, chatting with some man from Jackson, Miss., who is spending the night at the big house, a man doing something with pecan culture. It is always interesting to get the views of a resident of Mississippi at a y time and especially at present when the Oxford thing is still perking. I got home in time for my favorite news casts but miss all of them because I couldn't get inside the house. The ancient doorknob and the attendant lock have been playing out for some time and when I closed the door to go to supper, one piece or another of the contraption fell out of place, effectively locking the door and the key which I never employ couldn't even be inserted, what with the collapse of the mechanism. I didn't want to break into the house if that could be avoided and so I fiddled with the thing for three quarters of an hour but to no avail and finally thought the best thing to do was to put shoulder to the door and push and it took quite a lot of pushing to break the lock which finally gave way. If only my little pocket radio had been outside the house, I might have listened to the news as I worked on my problem.

And speaking of radio, I notice Howard K. Smith is in the news again, what with his ABC program on Mr. Nixon having caused such a flurry on Sunday night, what with Alger Hiss having been among those present participating in the broadcast. As I have probably expressed myself on the Hiss matter, I need scarcely repeat that I still feel that if, as Mr. Nixon claimed, Hiss was guilty of treason, why did Mr. Nixon never prosecute him for treason, either before or after Hiss was sent to jail because a jury doubted Hiss' truth in Grand Jury testimony. I realize, of course, that gangsters are sometimes sent to jail for avoiding income taxes and not for murder and possibly Mr. Nixon felt he couldn't establish case. In a matter



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wrecking a man's life, the accusations set forth by Messrs. Niren Chambers et al, deserves serious attention and a nation, if, indeed, betrayed, should be protected. Somebody in this affair has been woefully out of line and I shall always think it was Niren, Chambers et al until one or another Court has gone into the matter. (X)

Mrs. Walker called to say she had seen a notice in the legal news that Kay had purchased a property near the Walker's and that she had called Kay to congratulate her. She said Kay seemed gay of spirit and told her how she is going to have the house done over, a den for James and possibly a two-story building erected on the margin of the river, the lower story for a boat house, the upper for a study for James and so on.

James dropped in just before dinner today and remained to break bread and, after going to the camp for a couple of hours, came back for a moment or two before going on to town. I did not mention the Walker phone call and accordingly I was much impressed when he said he understood Kay was going to have the house done over and a den made for him and so on and so on and that he wasn't dreaming of ever going there to live as he wouldn't think of living under a roof so positively owned and managed by another. In a home jointly owned, he felt, two people could work out things satisfactory enough but in a house owned by one person and that owner having no end of kin folks who might be invited to dwell there without anyone else having anything to say, he was dead set against such an establishment and accordingly would continue dwelling where he and his wife now live. It seems to be quite a difficult nut to crack when all concerned have such determination. Acquainted with all concerned, I feel everybody has a proper position but I find it a misere that nobody is like to give an inch which ought to be fairly disasterous for domestic felicity. (X) Accusations of this nature aren't sufficient and it was the patriotic duty of Mr. Niren, after having stirred up such a rumpus, to proceed beyond the point of chipping a political tee held for his own advancement.

Well, Lord, I am indebted to I. S. Willard for a call to interrupt me in the above tirade. I. S. W. called to ask if I thought James felt she was going too far in assisting Kay in her projects. I said I believed James didn't care what his wife did in her real estate investments but that I had yet to find out what Kay and James are doing in Hatchiveches where Kay has only I. S. W. to lean on and James is content to lean on me. And so Veterans' Day closeth, a beautiful day and scuffling going on I do not understand.....

12093

Tuesday, November 13th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The grand weather continues. The sky is beginning to show through some of the big pecan trees where the leaves are gradually beginning to swirl downward and some of the Chinese magnolia leaves are dropping although other trees remain intact in the foliage department. In certain streaks across the garden, especially the front garden, there are minor evidences that Jack Frost has skirted the beds but he hasn't knocked out any of the canas, for instance, as yet. One of these nights, however, I am looking for him to make another round in no uncertain terms wereupon the great banana leaves will start folding up and then we shall know that summer is indeed departed. Miss Cam was forever saying: "Mother always said it never frosted before her birthday, November 13th." Well, perhaps Mother was right and more likely so if she was talking about Bayou LaFourche and not Cane River but here we are on the 13th and, as someone has so sagely remarked, "We shall see what we shall see".

I don't recall if I mentioned my happiness about the job which has recently been secured in the family of our concern. I am so glad to learn of this because I feel instinctively it must be get happiness all around. Yes, indeed, I remember very vividly the personality in the organization. And while recalling personalities that have persisted down the years, I frequently find myself wondering how the world of Egon turns. Should little Miss Lee ever encounter him, she will perhaps give us news from that quarter.

My phone rang at 7 tonight but when I answered there was such a racket of mechanical firecrackers, I could hear no human voice. I assumed it might be pecan park, as indeed it was, for I dialed that number forthwith and got the lady who said she and her husband had both been trying to establish contact without success, so far as Lestan was concerned. She wanted to tell me that she would be



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heading out for south Louisiana by air this coming Thursday, getting back home by Monday. From this, I assume both she and I will be having a busy interim. She wanted to tell me, too, that Thanksgiving dinner would be at 1:15 on the succeeding Thursday and that she had taken a private dining room at the Town House for the six of us. I had heard this from I. S. Willard but let it be news, naturally. I understand the Dan Henrys are going to break bread with the J. H. Henrys on Thanksgiving and so everybody will find himself more or less in congenial company.

A series of 'phone calls this morning, not to mention a couple of pilgrims prevented me from getting to the post office before the postman, ahead of time following the holiday, had already departed and so in the morrow's post will go forward not only this memo but those of Sunday and Monday last past under separate cover.

The new Lew Paul was sitting in the Unicorn House this morning and didn't seem too anxious for his equivalent of a cup of coffee when I passed his way. By noon, however, he was beginning to adjust himself alright and tonight he and Louella were both on their toes ready for their supper. I held the thought he may not turn out to be such a gad-about as his predecessor.

Fugabeu's mama is back from a weekend at the Charity Hospital in Alexandria, --a heart case. Her cabin is modest, her inclination toward the bottle much like that of her son and it is said the whole family was going around on a staggering merry-go-round last night which seems to make as little sense as does the unending activities of another heart patient we know.

It seems to be just about a month since Pilgrimage time and I haven't heard a peep out of Natalie. I suppose she is going around in circles but I held the thought she is jumping the cur her hoops alright.

In the last day or so, the radio has been talking about some new stamp, one of the type coming to hand the other day, but not, I suppose, the rare variety causing such a flurry among collectors. I enclose the one coming to hand.....

12095

12095

Wednesday, November 14th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and beautiful weather with enough of Jack Frost's touch during the night to pep up the ozone.

I seem to have been on the jump all day but as between 5 o'clock this morning and 10 tonight, I don't seem to have too much to show for my efforts.

I was delighted today at the sight of the pair of pronged, wrought iron forks James brought down from the blacksmith for me. They are just exactly what I wanted for they look pretty much like the instrument illustrators are for ever introducing into their pictures of Neptune and his triton or the Devil and his frightening triple pronged fork. Tonight they are gracing the fireplaces, -- the one in the living room, the other here behind me in the boudoir. It seems to me I can see the next big lusty Texan passing this way when he first catches sight of them for they are big and lusty just like him and wonderful and a little awe-evoking and are just grand for stirring up blazing logs either in the fireplace or under an open Texas sky. These striking instruments are so arresting in appearance that they might well quote that line from the Bard of Aven's sonnet:

"I am one whom men love not --but seldom forget."

I held the thought people seeing them may not be so frightened as to forget that Isaiah Jones would be happy to hammer out some more.

Kay is leaving Natchitoches by plane tomorrow at 11:15 and James suggested we break bread at the Town House and then go on to take a look at the Three Flags antique shop since the owners have asked me to pass that way to give them a pointer or two. I shall make the effort but shall have few if any pointers since I am under the impression neither gentleman has

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any feeling for the enterprise. Unless they get somebody to operate the thing, they would do better never to open their doors, it seems to me. But that is because I used to labor under the illusion that one ought to know something about merchandise he is selling to make a success of the venture. But, of course, we know that knowledge of a product is much less important than knowing the Midas trick of transforming everything into gold at touch of the hand and so perhaps these gentlemen will succeed. What made me especially dubious about the undertaking was a chance remark of I. S. Willard whose niece is the wife of one of the gentlemen. I. S. W. expressed the thought it would be so nice if the aforesaid niece's husband should go into some sort of business that had esthetic over-tones. My feet began getting cold right there. I doubt if either gentleman has any capital worth mentioning and they know just as much about antiques as I know about operating a jet plane. I know I couldn't get one off the ground and I doubt if they will ever get theirs.

Often I have found myself wishing James would open a gallery in Hatchiteches. It ought to be a success, not the least reason being that it probably wouldn't matter if it operated at a profit or a loss.

This afternoon I gathered enough sweet basil seed to plant a parish. My method is to observe the magical moment when a few of the plants are about ready to dispense their harbingers for next seasons' happiness, --small black seeds. Then I take a good size paper sack and push it straight down over the plant, bending over the plant forthwith and shaking the stems of the plant so all the seeds fall into the paper sack. Some leaves and broken stems fall off with the seeds, of course, but I leave the trash with the harvest and hang up the paper bag in the bathroom near the heater where the trash dries readily and may be blown away within a day or so. In the mean time the bath and boudoir, since the latter adjoins, is permeated with the most heavenly aromatic perfume one could hope to inhale and I'm folding up my beard right now and luxuriate in the "perfume from an unseen censer".....

12097

12097

Thursday, November 15th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Beautiful weather and sort of 80-ish. I went to town according to plan. An air plane was coming in for a landing at the air port as I reached the Town House which isn't too far from the air port, as I understand it, although I have never been to the air port. Half an hour later, James arrived. His indomitable sense of humor revealed him to be in his usual gay mood. It seems that when he started out from Pecan Park to drive Kay to the air port, she told him he was taking wrong road and that he ought to be taking another which he or rather which she pointed out. He told her he thought he was on the right track but she was positive about her feelings about the matter. After a while the little old road began getting smaller and smaller but Kay bravely waved her hand in the direction of some buildings, remarking that they were the hangars. Eventually a workman was asked about their situation and they were told the buildings were the flat ground buildings and that the air port was off yonder and so they turned back and, after re-tracing their steps, got back on to the right road and finally made their destination.

James and I dined at the Town House. We journeyed thence to the Broadmore shopping center where I visited a supermarket, --and A and P, I believe, the first time I had ever been in such an emporium. I found it wonderful. Next we visited an adjoining store, --a Franklin store, I believe it is called and found it just as wonderful in another sort of way as the food one had been. I was especially struck by the beauty of the wonderful artificial flowers, faked in Italy, as I understand it, then, --the pieces sent to Japan for assembly and then sent to the United States for sale and I thought everything remarkable. As I understand it, the individual flowers sell from 10 to 50 cents each and I understand nothing about the whole operation but I loved the merchandise in every detail.



12098

Driving on into town, after having purchased some gilded spray to put on the driedokra, we went off the record, promising never to mention we had ever done what we were about to do, --visit the new real estate purchased on upper Williams Avenue. The location is good. I didn't think much of the appearance of the house which we didn't investigate and while I thought the expanse in back of the house impressive in its depth, I found it barren back there of shade trees, there being only a few scraggy leafless peach trees of no merit. A garden could be made there, of course and so fast growing trees planted for shade but so far as a garden is concerned, it would be like starting from scratch. The property from Williams Avenue to the river runs east to west and as the property to the south of it seems barren of shade trees, it ought to be quite a blazing desert for some time in successive summers. Oddly enough there are plenty of oaks, -- too many, in fact, on the Williams Avenue side around the house where they would be needed least. Somebody with a lot of imagination and money could make quite a place out of the property but it would take a lot of both, plus quite a lot of time and my guess is that it will never be done but one never knows. The sharp contrast between it and other available property between the same thoroughfare and the river at an equally reasonable figure leaves me full of wonder that this particular tract should have been selected. It is interesting Kay has never mentioned the purchase of the place to me although she has contacted a nursery about making a garden. The nursery ought to be unable to resist any temptation it might have to unload tons of stuff nobody has cared to purchase and still have need for lots more plants, especially shade trees.

Back into the center of town and thence a couple of miles westward on the Many road where we discovered the prospective antique shop at a point where cars whiz along the highway at a great rate. Nobody was at the shop but we could see some pretty furniture inside. My opinion of the place and its chance for success were not brightened. We saw Pat later in the center of town and I merely said I was keeping my promise to visit the shop and he seemed pleased. I assume he probably owns

12099

Friday, November 16th, 1962.

Would you chance to recall the lady's  
last name:  
Mrs. Mary .....  
Park-Binet Galleries,  
Madison Avenue,  
New York, New York.

It seems to me the boy friend mentioned  
her last name in the correspondence about  
the picture but it eludes me.

James had in mind writing her about some Hunter  
things.....



12099

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10151

Friday, November 16th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy all day and warm. Warm and sprinkley tonight.

If memory serves -- and it has been  
a long time since morning -- I think I got a memo off  
to Lyme, asking if by chance little Miss Lee  
could remember the last name of Mrs. Mary somebody of  
the Park-Binet Galleries.

James has been casting about, trying to figure  
out the best way to exhibit some of the ninety  
odd primitive-abstracts by little Miss Hunter which  
he has been gathering together of late. I am  
not sure if everybody is collecting abstracts  
at the moment but I thought he might inquire  
of the lady mentioned on the assumption that Park-  
Binet, if not in the market for auctioning such items,  
might recommend somebody of reputable status or  
might even suggest such an enterprise might communicate directly  
with James.

Unannounced Sister blew in early this afternoon and  
I saw her at supper. She reported her grandson is doing  
just fine but as he was only born on the 5th instant,  
she hasn't seen him as yet. One might have  
supposed that because of the novelty of becoming a grandmother,  
she might have kept right on going until reaching Baton  
Rouge but not everybody, I gather, re-  
acts in the same way to such a blessed event.

I demonstrated my excellent judgement this morning by  
telling myself that the new Lew Paul had been here long  
enough to love his Louella and the fine ranging provided by the  
local gardens and accordingly invited the pair  
outside their Unicorn House enclosure to partake of their  
morning coffee. But neither Louella, the gardens or the  
cracked corn exerted much charm on Lew Paul who  
immediately took to the skyways, sailing over the big oak and



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the highway, alighting with infinite grace on the surface of the placid river where he immediately set out by expert swimmer's stroke for his former abode further down the river. I shall gather him up on the morrow or on Monday and exchange him for another in the far reaches of Red River, far beyond calling distance with associates yonder.

One of the reasons I was especially anxious to invite Lew Paul and Louella out of their enclosure was to enable me to leave their gate open so I could entice the remaining banties into that sanctum where they could more readily be caught. Andy has had -- several banties during the past season and welcomed the thought of having some more while I was equally happy at the prospect of getting rid of them and thus save from ruin a lot of plants the banties always seem so intent on scratching up. Guineas have a bad reputation for such devastation but the local ones never seem to indulge in such practice and I merely incarcerate them at the Unicorn House enclosure for a few weeks at planting time in the Spring until the seeds begin sprouting out, after which the guineas go about their business without ever disturbing the new growth. The banties are something else again, however and so I was delighted when I could round them up and present a whole bag full to Andy this evening and Andy seemed happy, too.

James dropped in this afternoon. I was glad to pause to chat with him for a dab but I must say I felt drowsy and possibly he sensed it for. His visit was comparatively brief, perhaps a couple of hours. Before he departed, however, the grapevine reported the advent of the weekend visitor and with that news all impulse to "rest my eyes" naturally vanished.

At coffee this morning I was shown a charming little couple in porcelain, -- a little boy and girl embracing or some such, although I couldn't make out the excellence of the details well since the figures weren't more than an inch or so in height. I believe it was some sort of a pin. It seems that one day this week Natalie gave a luncheon for a group of girl friends, each of whom was presented with these charming figures of varying design, -- souvenirs of August in Switzerland.

And now I must turn to a dab of correspondence before calling it a day and folding up my beard. I held the thought there may be a measure of peace and relaxation at Lyme although the impending holidays probably prelude that.....

00151

12102

Sunday, November 18th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Friday night's drizzle continued through Saturday and today. About an inch and a half made up the total. The ground absorbed every drop and can probably take as much more without developing a surplus. The thermometer "heovers" between the mid 40's and 50's.

I thought you might be interested in seeing how *okra* looks at the top of its stalk and I am accordingly sending along a single top which I have blown a bit of stuff on. I put a couple of clusters of mandarin berries as ballast. I reckon the berries will shell but thought you might like to be reminded of their appearance. As for the *okra*, if it doesn't get too battered up in transit, it will provide some notion as to how pleasantly it forms curves and how readily it might be used for holiday decorations if anyone cared to take care of it when the final *okra* pods appear at the close of the season. During the summer, one may pick these pods every other day, so fast do new ones replace those removed. As I recall, *okra* is a member of the cotton family and was brought over here by inmates of slave vessels. I don't know as I have ever seen the *okra* motif used in designs which may be because the plant probably wasn't known much in Europe. Sometimes the general effect of the stem, topped with the pods, suggests the pre-Renaissance design of a bishop's crozier but I am under the impression these designs were inspired by ferns which were native to the neighborhoods where the great cathedrals flourished.

If the package is smashed up in transit, you will have lost nothing. The paper sack I had intended to enclose for your convenience, should have been cared to take the *okra* with you, was inadvertently omitted from the package but since the package itself is only the size of a shirt box, you will perhaps not find it too cumbersome, should you decide to carry it with you.



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12103

As for the weekend, it was raggedy enough. Everything was sweetness--artificial, --and light--artificial. There was one exception covering the middle of the day when the lady was entirely out of her mind, denouncing everything and everybody and especially Celeste. This explosion came when Sister learned that Dan and family were to dine on Thanksgiving across the fence. Early on Saturday morning Sister had asked me for all the flowers in the Ghana garden which she said she wanted to use for decorations on Thanksgiving when the younger boy and the girl would be home. But when she heard the D. Henrys were to dine across the fence, she threw a fit and said she had planned all the time to come here. Of course the Dan Henrys will not break bread here as she is present and that is just one of a dozen cockeyed angles to any circumstance in which Sister can get herself. But by supper time everything was rasey again, and so it was this morning when she came to visit me

and get more flowers and say she wouldn't be back until Friday which may or may not be true. Of course, the switch from raucous insanity to gushing sweetness is typical of the old, old pattern forever operating in Sister's case but the indifference about seeing the grandson falls into a category I hadn't expected. There was one hilarity during the noonday rumpus that made me laugh in my beard. Sister radiates such poison and confusion that even those who usually disdain recognizing its existence are obviously effected by it. A case in point was the clerk who, when the three of us, Sister, he and I, the clerk dished out soup for me and for himself and the clerk started to eat, having utterly forgotten to dish out any for Sister. Smile.

The lady who is contacting United Nations Gift Shop is Miss Esther Everett Lape, 447 East 57th Street, N.Y.C. I think this friend of Mrs. Walker's is quite a fine person and perhaps we shall be hearing from her later.

James came down this afternoon. Kay, la Storm and la Crabtree are expected to fly in from New Orleans on the morrow. There was something in today's Shreveport Times about closed circuit TV teaching and I believe Natalie's name is mentioned.....

12104

30131

Monday, November 19th, 1962.

Memorandum:

The sprinkles continue and the thermometer seems stuck in the 40's.

I assume Kay, la Storm and Mrs. Crabtree flew in today under a dripping sky but I have been most particular to make telephone calls either to the Register or Willard residence, thinking it better to give everybody a chance to get established before having to bother with phone calls. I believe I. S. Willard is somewhere in south Louisiana and I have no doubt the South Carolina ladies are busy getting established and accustomed to the Willard menage.

J. H. or somebody mentioned that the current Readers Digest has an article about the Nixon-Hiss business of years back. I wonder if I should write the office of the Attorney General in Washington to inquire why it was Hiss was never tried for treason if the Nixon political skirmish really did turn up facts.

Mrs. Walker just called. She spent Saturday morning at the college with a view to doing a story about Natalie's TV program and reports she got a very nice picture of the lady. It will be interesting to compare the Walker presentation with that in yesterday's Shreveport Times which was a product of the college public relations section.

Mrs. Walker sayeth further that feelings expressed by the lesser orders in the town are quite violent in regard to the five or six people charged with murder in the slaying of the college youth a couple of weeks back. I believe it is hoped the Court doings will be held



12105

during the holidays when people have something  
else to do other than concentrate on murder.

A slight interruption enters here. James just  
called to say that with the weather and all, the  
ladies had found air travel impossible and  
accordingly have borrowed a car and driver from a Morgan  
City friend. They 'phoned they would be spending the night  
in Baton Rouge and proceeding to Natchitoches on Tuesday.

James says TV predicts more  
rain for the morrow in juxtaposition to  
my radio report that mentioned fair skies.

I suppose climatic conditions cut little ice  
with travelers of the Storm variety. As for myself,  
I find it impossible to imagine why anyone in her 90's  
should want to be prowling around anywhere in  
the November rains, once October's bright blue weather  
has been put away for another twelfth month.

I don't recall if I mentioned having heard  
on the air a month or so back that the Elizabeth Murry  
Book Shop in Dallas has been acquired by Doubleday.  
The last I knew, Elizabeth Murry is living in California  
and although married, is carrying on along with a domestic  
career some sort of a writers' agency on the West Coast.

So often these past 10 days I have thought of little Miss Lee  
wishing one might share all the records revolving about Mrs. R.....

12106

Tuesday, November 20th, 1962.

Memorandum;

Our drizzle continued throughout the night  
and throughout today and tonight it is  
still drizzling. The thermometer remains about  
stationary in the 40's. We are not getting too  
much moisture and I suppose the temperature is about  
average for this season. We are  
promised blue skies for the morrow but I'm  
taking that with a grain of salt.

I am forever being impressed by the determination  
of road runners to brave inclement weather. Sister  
dropped a post card saying some Fort Worth folks would come  
either today or tomorrow. I didn't see them today.  
I did see a couple of other batches, however,  
the last five or six people under the wing of  
the same Mrs. Rogers of Fairbanks, Alaska, who was here  
a month or so ago. Mrs. Rogers seems to be showing good  
sense in lingering on along Cane River instead of catapulting  
herself back into the Alaskan snowbanks. One  
of the men in today's Rogers' party was a man  
doing research for the mental section of the Louisiana  
Hospital Board. I told him frankly he had at last  
contacted the right man.

I didn't hear anything from town today about  
the South Carolina travelers but perhaps  
I shall get a buzz from that quarter before  
I have finished jotting down this memo. in-  
terruption....

A call just came through but not from  
town or from the travelers. This was a call from  
Alexandria, --the editor of some paper, perhaps  
the Belton High School or some such, --I had a peer  
connection, asking for an interview on the morrow. I  
suggested 2:30 in the afternoon although I already  
have one or two appointments for that hour.

I was lucky enough to hear the President's  
press conference at 5 o'clock our time tonight.  
I shall hunt it up for a second hearing in a delayed broadcast  
later tonight for I should like to listen to it again.  
Late last night, while casting about among the



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air waves, I happened on Dr. Bourpe, an Oklahoma City Bible slapper of some popularity among the great unwashed. He was tirading against everything including the Kennedy Administration, the United Nations and so on. I noted that he made the usual amount of half truths, false statements and so on, as, for example, when he got around to Alger Hiss, he spoke of him as being the man who was sent to prison for being a spy and I wished Hiss would summon him to Court to prove his statement.

Romance is in flower, in spite of the weather, across the road from the artist's house where her daughter, Jackie, resides. The artist's grandson, a dull boy, --off spring of Clyde Claude Emmett Davis and Jackie, is living with his mama and has brought in a daughter of Murphy Brown whom he has been courting since deep summer. Mr. Davis and Miss Brown haven't decided upon a formal marriage as yet and they seem quite comfortable with Mr. Davis' mama, the aforesaid Jackie. In passing it might be remarked that Miss Brown is impressively pregnant, it is said, but that is only a detail Junior Davis used to drive his grandma's car off Little River way to pick up Miss Brown on summer evenings, it is said, but grandma would never let Junior use the car to escort the young lady home. How the Welfare Department will view the new domestic arrangements on part of Miss Brown, I wouldn't know. Junior once expressed the thought of marriage but lacked money for the license. One thing certain, Grandma will never shell out money for such tomfoolery on the part of her kin folks although, in a pinch, she might do so for somebody like Pa.

At the 9 o'clock coffee hour, I was pleased to note the enchantment of mine hostess over the sweet card coming to her from the true hand of little Miss Lee. I thought it altogether charming, holding the thought the while that the aforesaid little Miss Lee will continue concentrating on the mountains of must stuff before turning to other lines of endeavor since I firmly believe every possible moment devoted to catching one's breath should be exercised until pressures ease.....

12108

12108

Wednesday, November 21st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy all morning with the sun breaking through around 2 in the afternoon. Pleasantly cool tonight with a heavenly canopy of stars tonight to exhilarate the soul.

Twenty billion ways of expressing it could not possibly convey the delight I experienced when discovering a wonderfully fat letter from Lyme in today's post. I found all the topics touched on so much to my liking and the portraits rang such pretty notes of assurance as I considered impending business with Isaiah. Blessed be the pen that contrives such lovely things. I am especially happy to have the Lyme agenda for Thanksgiving. The program sounds as though it may well be made up of sufficient participants as to make the doings sufficiently fulsome as to keep everybody and especially the hostess pretty much on the jump. I held the thought the hubbub may be such as to provide lots of little slices of merriment that will provide no end of pleasant memories at close of day when a measure of quiet has settled over the place and one can pause before sleep to review the sounds of joy and the delights of association of which the day was made up.

I cannot express how delighted I am and how indebted I feel for the pains taken to acquaint me with the details revealed by the Versailles film. The people and the places with whom and with which one communes so many times every day eliminates the physical distances between and makes possible the intimacy existing between a Lydia and Leston, a Versailles and any place one chances to be. That you should have enumerated the details glimpsed by the camera and especially your reference to the Chapel gave me special pleasure for it had chanced that only yesterday I had been turning through a little old volume of the 1740's containing an architect's plan of the chapel, as though the edifice were cut in two, revealing the structural details with remarkable clarity, enabling me the better to imagine the points where the present restoration work would probably be most in order.



20151

12109

It was so characteristically thoughtful of little Miss Lee to have forwarded the clippings regarding the final rites of our departed friend. I shall be looking for the envelope with infinite eagerness. None of the points concerning the matter, --the points touched on in the letter, were known to me. I had heard nothing, for instance, of the presence of La Marquise de Reading. I recall so vividly when she married Lord Reading. He was considerably older than she and, if memory serves, she had assisted him as secretary at some time prior to their wedding. La Marquise was a beautiful woman, in striking contrast to Lord Reading who somehow by leanness of face, always reminded me of President Wilson's Secretary of the Treasury and son-in-law, William McAdoo. If memory serves, Lord Reading was an Isaac before being knighted. As I recall, there was a parallel or two between the general elements, --disparity of ages and so on that were to be found in the marriage of the Readings and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Ickes, F. D. R.'s Secretary of Interior, what with both bridegrooms being capable and much older than their attractive brides. The Lyme letters are always so redolent with material making me wish we might take up points endlessly.

Except for the half hour between 11 and 11:30 when I could, thanks to the unexpected arrival of a secretary when I could commune with Lyme, has been a whiz, cluttered up with people all morning, afternoon and evening. I summoned Andy to come at 12:45 so we could turn the house upside down before my 2:30 appointment for an interview and the succeeding parade of people. Andy arrived on schedule and immediately we did turn the house upside down. In the midst of it, however, James arrived, bringing operations to a standstill. When I mentioned the 2:30 appointment, James said he would leave promptly at 2:29. That, of course, left the uproar right where it was until dusk-dark. I sent Andy to concentrate of gardening, distracted as I was by the ruins around me. I resumed housecleaning after dark so that things are once more in order and I think I shall sleep mightily tonight.....

12110

11151

Thursday, November 22nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Beautiful, sunny weather for Thanksgiving with the thermometer in the 60's and tonight's heavens again spangled with stars..

James came down about 10 and we chatted until 12, driving to town where we picked up Kay in Pecan Park and drove to the town house. There she and I waited in the special dining room while James went to fetch Mesdames Storm, Crabtree and Willard, giving me an opportunity to listen to some of Kay's ideas on doing over the property she has purchased. I gather she plans it more as a home for Aunt Willie than anything else. She did take the opportunity to express her extravagant admiration of I. S. Willard. I believe these two girls were made for each other.

In 10 minutes the ladies arrived and I found Aunt Willie her usual self. The six of us sat at an amply long table. No one sat at the head or the foot of the board but rather three on one side facing three on the opposite side and I liked the arrangement. The food was excellent, --especially the turkey and dressing. The pumpkin pie was tasty, too. No wine was served which would have been better, had it appeared, I think.

After dinner, --but first off I might remark how we were placed at table, -- Kay, Lestan and I. S. Willard on one side in that order while on the opposite side, Mrs. Crabtree facing Kay, James facing Lestan and Aunt Willie facing I. S. Willard. I. S. Willard had brought a beautiful potted artificial plant from New Orleans and it was so placed on the table that it cut off Aunt Willie's view of me but we were able to penetrate at barrier.

After dinner, we drove to the Willard residence for an hour's pleasant chat. I was most favorably impressed by the gardening I. S. Willard has achieved, making the most out of every inch of her comparatively small property.

James brought me home at 4. We chatted a moment with Celeste who chanced to be standing by the cattlegap in front of her house. I asked her how her Thanksgiving entertainment had gone. She paused before responding and then said: "It was all such a bore".



01151

12111

We skipped supper at the big house and I was happy to have a go at a grand slab of sweet potato pie which Celeste had sent to me during the morning. James had brought me some ice cream which remains in the ice box and I doubt if I sample it tonight, having already eaten more than I should have today.

Along about 6 this evening, Natalie called. I took the opportunity to tell her how busy Miss Lee has found herself since her vacation and she said she understood perfectly and that she was expecting some clippings from the Baton Rouge morning Advocate having to do with the TV teaching and that she felt when she got these off to you shortly, you would understand how busy she has been also. I told her I felt instinctively that friendship such as hers and little Miss Lee's was of such sturdy stuff that mere absence of communications during busy times couldn't put a dent in anything so fine. She said that expressed her sentiments to a T.

Back to the Pecan Park center, it appears there's a slight endurance test in progress as between that place and Briarwood. It seems Aunt Willie expressed the intention of driving up to call on Carrie and Kay thought of going, too, but then there was the thought that Carrie has never visited her since she, Kay, has been living in the Parish. This doesn't mean a thing so far as Carrie is concerned, I feel positive. Still it would have been nice if Carrie had made a gesture. Perhaps I. S. Willard will drive the other ladies up there on the morrow or the weekend one day. Perhaps only Aunt Willie and Mrs. Crabtree will make the jaunt. I wanted to say yesterday how much I had appreciated the little account of the doings of folks south of the border for I like to keep abreast with them who somehow seem like characters out of a book about whom I have read and found so appealing as to make me want to know what happen after the book itself had closed.

As a final line on this Thanksgiving Day, I also want to raise my heart and voice in praise of God for all the happinesses which are ours.....

12112

01151

Friday, November 23rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

A lovely day and sort of mid 70 and plenty of stars tonight.

Great was my surprise to discover a letter from Lyme in today's post giving the Vandergrief name on a separate sheet and the loveliest of letters on the rose decorated stationery. I had not expected a response to an inquiry covering Park Binet so soon and I regretted when posting my inquiry I had not suggested a telephone call to the galleries to inquire the name, assuming that would have been the easiest way to learn it.

And great was my delight to find in the same post the big envelope of swell clippings which I am going to run through with a fine tooth comb in the days ahead. How wonderful are the ways of little Miss Lee.

My agents had reported James to be at the camp and I anticipated a visit from him so I could hand him the address. He did not stop here, however, and so I chatted with him at home by 'phone this evening. As luck would have it, the girls were all at I. S. Willard's or some place and so I could pass along one or two bits of information regarding Stern plans in which I thought he would be interested such as her determination to remain at the Bluff and so on even though Kay does rig up the Williams Avenue residence for her.

And speaking of Aunt Willie, I intended reporting that in the conversation with her on Thursday, I was interested especially in two points she touched on, one concerning plants, the other a person. In speaking of butterfly lilies, she remarked how strange she thought it was that so far as she knew, her garden is the only one in South Carolina where butterfly lilies are to be found and we both wondered why there should be such a scarcity of them there and how seldom one ever find them in Louisiana, especially as both her plants and the local ones seem to thrive with such vigor. I was impressed when she referred to



12113

12113

them as ginger lilies which, of course, they are not.

The surprise I felt when she mentioned a person had to do with Archibald Rutledge. She used to go to Hampton Plantation near McClellandville, occasionally and counted Mr. Rutledge as her friend. She said that when she had gone to Morgan City last week, she had taken several copies of the Rutledge book, "Life's Extras" all autographed, which she presented to friends attending the dedication ceremonies of whatever it was that was being dedicated. I haven't had an opportunity since our conversation to consult my file but I felt so positive that little Miss Lee had sent me Mr. Rutledge's obituary quite a while back that I gathered Aunt Willie hadn't learned of his death. I assume she must have had several copies of his "Life's Extras" on hand in order to give them away last week and yet this seems somewhat odd. Heaven knows I hope I am in error and that Mr. Rutledge is still ailing and hearty.

It was so thoughtful of little Miss Lee to report findings in the United Nations Gift Shop. I doubt if I am going to be able to do any business in that quarter in view of the prices so thoughtfully enclosed. I think a profit can be realized only if tiles are produced in considerable quantity, --perhaps thousands, since the individual tile on a basis of 150 quantity involves about \$2.10 each. Add to this figure the fact that transportation charges run around 16 or 17 dollars and either U. N. or the local producer would have to operate at no profit at all. The cost of the processes in transferring the original painting to a process for getting it on to tiles runs well over \$100.00 and such charges and others could of course be spread over a quantity of items but on small quantities, these initial manufacturing costs mount high. They can be disposed of gradually in this area cover costs and should re-orders be required, subsequent sales will permit a profit. So turns the world in the market place and happy am I for today's delightful surprises.....

12114

12114

Sunday, November 25th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Sunny Saturday, cloudy Sunday and withal mild.

It was such a pleasant weekend with a few nice people on Saturday and none on Sunday and nobody from Shreveport showing up.

I had half expected the ladies from town might journey to Briarwood, what with the weather being so pretty but they didn't. James dropped in on Saturday afternoon and remained until nearly 4. He didn't report any social news and I inquired about nothing. Tonight Mrs. Walker called. She said she had dined this noon at the Country Club where she had been approached at her table by I. S. Willard who wanted to present some two or three ladies at her table. --Mrs. Storm, Mrs. Sweet, Mrs. Crabtree and so on. I. S. Willard said there was to be a tea at her house for Aunt Willie between 4 and 6 and invited the Walkers. The Walkers dropped in at 4:30 and Mr. Walker found himself the beau of the ball since he was the only gentleman present. The lady doctor arrived shortly after the Walkers, apparently on a professional call, disappearing with Kay and neither of them putting in an appearance before the Walkers departed.

Aunt Willie reported she was remaining in Hatchitoches to witness the turning on of the lights on Saturday. She said that as Pres of the South Carolina Federate Garden Clubs or some such, she was expected in the low country one day this week but the meeting would be postponed until she returned. She gave a few terse observations regarding the Kennedys who are ruining the country, it seems, appointing judges from afar to occupy Federal benches in the South.

It is said Kay is looking more and more like her auntie. It was felt the latter exuded a poison that made heavy inroads on the niece. I was impressed



12115

to hear such a statement since it sounded  
precisely like the thoughts expressed by James.

When I heard the opinion express by one who scarcely  
knows the people involved, I could but run through  
my own impressions for it was opined that the niece obviously  
was so bogged down by her auntie that she probably  
could never emerge emotional stability.

One of the reasons why there's a vague sort of  
isolation at the Pecan Park establishment is  
because nobody there has any stable pattern of existence  
and society soon avoids the unpredictable. For  
instance, it was said Kay would accompany la Storm  
back to the Bluff next week. Then it was said she would not.  
Plans for Christmas were based on the fact that she would be there  
--that is, both ladies would be there. Then it was  
decided Kay would not be there but would send her San Francisco  
sister to be there. Then it was decided la Storm might  
visit somebody on the West Coast. Now it isn't known where any  
body will be and one or two people have asked me where to send  
Christmas greetings and as I don't know myself, I suggest  
Pecan Park as a forwarding center but that seems to strike  
a hollow note. For people who like to  
never get off a merry-go-round, such an existence might be  
fun but I don't find anyone in particular except Aunt'illie  
relishing the confusion.

Saturday afternoon's visitors included a couple of priests  
who were strolling in the gardens at a quarter to five as James  
was leaving. One, a father O'Brien and other whose name I  
forgot made up the couple. Father O'Brien is attached  
to Northwestern, the other gentleman is from  
Port Elizabeth, South Africa, a place I don't seem to know.  
I wanted to learn something about how things are turning  
in South Africa but the Reverend Fathers had heard I  
had an early edition of James Joyce's Ulysses and they  
wanted to talk 20th century writings and so we did just  
that and I shall perhaps catch up on South Africa later.

I thought of little Miss Lee this afternoon  
wishing she might have seen the parade along about dusk when  
I went to turn on a hydrant near the center of the Ghana  
circle, still bravely abloom with zinnias Both black cats were  
with me, Louella, the goose, the gray and the white guineas,  
the blue and white peacocks  
and the contrasts were wonderful.....

12116

Monday, November 26th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and a little cool.  
Rain is promised for tonight and tomorrow and rain for the  
impending weekend. For those planning to attend the  
Saturday night doings in town, may it be rained out before then.

James came to see me this afternoon. He said the  
girls had gone to Briarwood this afternoon, --Mesdames  
Register, Storm, Crabtree and Willard with the  
latter driving the horseless carriage.

What, if any, report we get on that hejira ought to  
be diverting if not illuminating.

James said Kay had planned to call me to  
invite me to join the others partaking of thanksgiving  
turkey to dine Friday night at the Country Club.  
Fortunately Kay discovered that I. S. Willard  
is giving another tea on Friday. It was felt that  
dinner on top of a tea might be too much of a physical  
strain, supposedly on Aunt Willie but actually on  
Kay. Accordingly the Friday night dinner plans were  
withdrawn, much to my satisfaction.

Present plans call for the departure from Shreveport  
by plane for Charleston by Mesdames Storm and Crabtree.  
Kay envisioned James driving her and the two ladies  
to Shreveport on Monday, spending the night in a comfortable  
motel there, with the two Carolina ladies enplaning  
Tuesday. James thought it would be easier all around if  
the ladies journeying eastward, mounted a plane in  
Hatchitoches that would take them only a fraction of time that  
a drive would require but Kay said Bill likes to fly  
in big planes and she doubted if her auntie would be comfortable  
in the more modest size one. There was some talk about  
chartering a large plane. One disadvantage in having lots of  
money, I suppose, is all the doings involved in how most comfortably  
one may get from here to there. I can but marvel that  
James keeps his sense of humor in the midst of such flurries.



12117

When speaking in last night's memo of the group of furred and feathered friends accompanying me at dusk dark in my tour of the Ghana garden, I think I omitted the name of Mr. Carrell, the white rabbit, whose whiteness rivals that of the peacock, goose and guinea and whose gate contrasts so sharply with that of the black cats. I never see the black cats on a frolic with Mr. Carrell although they are friendly neighbors and often one or the other of the black cats go off galliping in the direction where Mr. Carrell is nibbling. They never actually run into him and as he never moves or even ceases nibbling because he probably knows as do the cats that while it certainly looks as though there might be an up-set, should they come into contact, all know that the two bodies involved will miss each other by a hair's breadth. When the troupe, taking it breakfast or supper time, begin following me, they must present a curious assemblage of unlikely associates but they all seem happy together and it seems to me a together heartening to observe how neighborly such different characters can be. I must say a candid camera shot of the whole posse would present a picture few people would probably accept as a casual reality of friendly neighbors.

It was nice hearing from Robina today. I was amused at the Maude Dunn report of scrapbooks in the library. I think this is an excellent example of honest testimony that isn't true. Surely on a witness stand, Miss Dunn's testimony would receive sympathetic hearing and be accepted as of considerable weight. The fact is the scrapbooks have never been in the library, either in Miss Cammie's time or since but Maude Dunn used to know Melrose and reported seeing the books there on her last visit. I have heard other people speak of the collection of Miss Cammie's scrapbooks they had seen in the library and eventually I came to the conclusion that most such reports came from people who had but a vague notion of what a scrapbook resembles to state and that they have assumed that the bound newspapers in the library are scrapbooks.

I feel like doing some work tonight on this keyboard but think I shall take a turn in the fresh air first for I think a sprig of sweet basil or sage I may pluck along my way will give added zest to a 10 o'clock snack when it's news time.....

12118

Tuesday, November 27th, 1962.

Memorandum:

It rained gently all night and continued misty throughout the day. The thermometer has stalled around 50 and so it is pleasant enough with a light jacket.

The program for the Christmas festival in town on Saturday arrived today and I am putting a copy in the post for little Miss Lee. I think it is scarcely anything but advertisements and I shouldn't bother to glance through it if an odd moment shouldn't be to hand. I think there are a few sketches of the town, as scene or seen by the pen of I. S. Willard and I believe someone said there is an old sketch of Melrose but I haven't glanced into the thing. James saw a copy and said the advertisement as inserted by The Enterprise and the one by the Times, -- the latter published the program, are strikingly different and he found the Times notice quite dumb.

Shortly after I jotted down last night's memo, Aunt Willie called to report on her day's visit to Briarwood. She said she found Caroline looking wonderfully well and that she was jumping around with all her old time agility. It seems the greenhouse is situated in back of Briarwood house. About two and a half feet of earth was excavated to install the ground floor a little below surface level. The sides of the building have glass windows but the roof is of conventional sheet iron or whatever that metallic stuff is called. I suppose a glass roof in summer would require whitewash on the roof, were it of glass but all the greenhouses I have ever seen have had glass roofs but Briarwood is different.

It has one striking feature for this area at least and that is the fact that it is heated by electricity which ought to be a fine way to keep it warm and increase the R. E. A. dividends.

According to Aunt Willie, Caroline has a "contract" with some oil company and used the money to build the greenhouse. What



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12119

Aunt Willie should have said probably is that some oil company has a lease for oil on Briarwood and that is where the money came from. I believe a dollar or a dollar and a quarter per acre is the general rate paid for the Briarwood neighborhood and as Briarwood runs into 2 or 3 hundred acres, probably, once the greenhouse was built, there wasn't much left over for paying the electrical bills which, along other things, is none of my business.

She said that Harper and Brother had written Carrie last year to do a book for them but that Carrie hadn't been able to get it started as yet because there was such a drought that she had to spend all her time watering plants by hand. What difficulties and barriers winter will inter-pose, only La Dermen can imagine.

James came unannounced this afternoon around 2 and remained for supper. It seems that Kay had the ladies over to Pecan Park for the afternoon and I gather he was in no hurry to get back home although he reports that relations all around seem to be just fine. As he drove away at first dark, he slowed down and returned to say that after almost a year, he had at last hit on just the right name for the camp, -- Thank Heaven. I assured him nobody could have thought up anything better.

A slight interruption breaks in between this paragraph and the above. Mrs. Walker phoned to say she had had a call from Dorothy Erwin who seems to be the Special Features editor of the Shreveport Times. A while back, prior to pilgrimage, perhaps, Miss Erwin was casting about for material and Mrs. Walker asked her about running an article on Miss Hunter, primitive artist. Miss Erwin confided that the Shreveport Times was planning color printing pretty soon and she would like to hold a Hunter article for that. And so Miss Erwin called today to ask if she might see the Walkers on Saturday as she planned to attend the turning on of the lights. Mrs. Walker responded negatively as they plan to be out of town and suggested another date when Miss Erwin could round up a primitive and bring a color photographer to take some shots. In view of the Shreveport Times' pre-Confederate notion on Afro-Americans, I can only gasp when I think what will happen to Miss Erwin when that sheet unfolds.....

12120

21131

Wednesday, November 28th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Beautiful weather, all sunshine and stars and sort of 50 like.

When one hasn't any news in particular and can't find any thing to be especially mad at anyone about, the most natural thing in the world seems to be the dishing of one's friends which I shall proceed to do.

I suppose I mentioned last night that Kay called, saying she was going to get James to drive her and the ladies down this afternoon.

I rattled the grapevine and summoned Andy to come a-jumpin' early so that we could turn the house upside down before the guests arrived which I assumed would be around 3 o'clock.

To my surprise, James appeared at my door ten minutes before noonday dinner. He said as he had supped here last night, he wouldn't think of dining today and I told him I wouldn't think of anything else and so we dined.

He said he had told Kay this morning that he would be glad to bring her auntie, Mrs. Crabtree and I. S. Willard if she wished to come down this afternoon but that he felt that Kay herself shouldn't try to make it, what with the good earth being so soft in the wake of the rains that her crutches would sink into the ground and it would be dangerous for her to try to negotiate the gardens. He said he felt, possibly he understood Kay to say that if her auntie should come, she wanted to come, too.

How things ever turned out, I don't know since



03151

12121

I never heard from Kay and James spent the afternoon at the camp, passing this way for 10 minutes around 4:45 when he headed toward town.

Naturally my afternoon was hedged in by uncertainty since James had declared he didn't know if the ladies under I. S. Willard's guidance, would come anyway or not. I find the whole set up quite beyond my ability to imagine.

James reported that Helma Kysen had invited the Registers and Mesdames Crabtree and Stern to try Northwestern onion soup at the President's residence on Thursday but Kay had declined the feed since she wouldn't be getting under full sail until after 2. Helma then offered to take them for a drive about the campus and so I suppose the drive will end up with a tea at the college but James will not be present. I hope everybody concerned knows what he and they are doing. As for myself, I don't.

I'm not sure how the trick was turned, but somehow in all today's suspended animation, I got the five parterres of the Ghana garden denuded of its remaining flowers and vegetables,-- everything except the circle where the greens remain valid and the flowers colorful. Now the parterres may be ploughed forthwith and then stirred up again in February for early planting. One of the fruits of the parterre sweepings is a collection of nine eggplants which I have heaped up with some little pumpkins, okra and such like in a big old wooden tray and I like the harvest assortment, the more so because I think it would delight little Miss Lee's eye, too, were she to view it.

I have a flock of people scheduled for tomorrow morning and there's something on the docket for afternoon which eludes my memory momentarily and I hold the thought the weather may continue as promising as tonight's vast canopy of stars seems to suggest and may it be doubly so ever Lyme.....

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12122

Thursday, November 29th, 1962.

Memorandum:

"We were promised blue sky but we get clouds instead but the temperature is mild and perhaps we shall get a dab of blue on the morrow.

The day was busy enough but I fear it was more entangled with people than things that should have been accomplished and weren't.

I did get the Ghana garden ploughed, much to my satisfaction and quite a few loads of mulch and cotton hulls distributed, seeds gathered for next season's sweet basil and so on.

Before things really got turning this morning, Dan's wife, June, called the store, -- which is an odd call to put through for someone in the family wanting a favor from me. It chanced that Celeste was alone in the office and answered and told June to call me which she did, indeed, do, asking when I could arrange a tour for the relatives of one of her Pecan Park neighbors. I hit on this afternoon and there went the better part of half a day. In the morning, the Dean of the Hussian School at Northwestern, a Mrs. Steinman or some such name, was scheduled to make a tour. She brought ten or twelve other biddies with her which struck me as ample for an escort.

My agents reported James as being at the camp this afternoon so I take it he may well have found me too busy, if he ever chanced to take a gander in this direction. In any event, I did not see him.

I grabbed off a minute this noon to 'phone the sisters Haupt and Hope Haupt answered. They are old friends of Miss Kate Perkins and are probably in their mid 80's, Miss Hope still going strong and Miss Bertha gradually playing out. I explained the



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12123

sole reason for my call was to tell them how delighted this  
and that friend of mine had been of late when, in passing their  
overplanted property on Williams Avenue, they had caught sight of  
one or two lovely trees with beautiful yellow leaves. Miss  
hope seemed pleased and opined they may well be the ginge--ginge  
trees, or however one spells the name of that bit of plant life.  
I remember a street in Brooklyn near Sterling Place, that used to have  
two or three blocks of these trees but I don't recall ever having  
seen them when their leaves were anything but green. So  
many people, many of whom really knew something about horticulture,  
call trees by such different names that I am always  
mildly surprised if I recognize a name familiar to me. Only  
today a gentleman who knows his trees pointed to the tulip tree  
by the cottage and styled it a Japanese Varnish Tree.. and  
somehow this reminds me that the other day somebody explained that  
the julep of mint julep fame stems, not from English, as I had  
supposed, but from the Persian. One lives a little while but never  
long enough to catch up with or get straighten out all such intricacies.

I heard from Carmen this morning that Natalie presided over  
the public address system last night at a style show  
held at the country Club. Carmen called me this morning and as  
she was in the parade, I didn't hear anything much about  
other high points than Carmen's appearance. Carmen could  
spin it out very long, however, as she was leaving forthwith  
for Shreveport to appear on a TV program beating the  
drum for the Saturday night festival of lights. I believe she  
told me she journeys to Alexandria on the morrow to grace the  
cameras for the same purpose.

If I can set hand to them, I shall enclose  
a couple of communications from today's  
post, a card, signed R., from Miss Kate Perkins  
and the other from Mrs. Charles Wood of Wichita, Kansas,  
demonstrating on the one hand, that a person, Miss Kate,  
approved the column about Mrs. Roosevelt, the  
other, Mrs. Wood, finding it or wondering if it could  
have been intended as criticism, thereby going to  
show how little one knows how anything one knocks off  
will be interpreted. And now I must knock off some mail  
and thence to slumberland to dream of a golden ginkgo.....

P.S.

I was amused today when I learned J. H., as  
President of R. E. A. had just received a letter from  
Briarwood, complaining that electricity charges  
are out of line. I gather the greenhouse heating  
must be getting hotter.....

12124

Friday, November 30th, 1962.

Memorandum:

All blue and gold and mild.

When the clerk, in pursuance of custom, passed this  
way this noon for a quick port and to journey on  
to the big house with me to dine, he announced we  
had company. And so he and I dined with the General  
and wife. I thought the General looked well. He has  
been in San Antonio at some military hospital for a check-  
up. His wife seemed very pleasant. Immediately  
after demin-tasse, they arose and said goodbye, explaining  
they wanted to stop in Pineville-Alexandria to see Robert  
and take him for a little ride and thence go on  
to reach Baen Reuge before dark.

About 1 o'clock, James dropped in. I was  
by the big pot and he explained he had just-chatted  
with the General whom he hadn't seen since 1942. He  
said the General and wife were just saying goodbye at the  
store to the folks there as he came along.

As we chatted by the pot, I heard the side gate toward  
the african house close and in a moment Celeste  
appeared on my gallery and came across the grass toward James  
and me. She was obviously in a high state of annoyance and  
James remarked later the red spots of disturbance around her cheek  
bones. She asked me what I thought was wrong with  
Madam General. I hadn't noted anything untoward.  
She said when she appeared at her house at 11, she  
had explained that she really hadn't wanted or intended to  
stop here en route home from San Antonio but  
her husband wouldn't make the trip via Shreveport so she could  
see her sister, Beatrice, unless the wife would stop here  
with him. Celeste asked why she didn't want to stop and  
was told it didn't matter and to forget the whole thing.  
Celeste wasn't for ignoring such a statement and it



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turned out that recently when Celeste was returning with some people from New Orleans, she had not stopped off to contact the S. G. Henrys and so Madam General was mad although Celeste had written her the day following her return, saying how sorry she was to have missed her. Well, Madam General really stirred up quite a stew and now there's another whiz-bang in a family already overstuffed with ruptures. I must say the girls do have quite a time.

On the urban side of life, there's a persistent rumor making the rounds that there will be a racial scuffle in town on Saturday night when thousands of people assemble to view the fireworks. I assume these rumors may have been set afoot by the same type of mind that calls bus and plane terminals to report bomb scares. But the evil tidings spread far afield, that is far beyond the Cane River country. When Celeste asked me over 9 o'clock coffee if I had heard anything about possible difficulties, --all coming in the wake of the killing of the college student, I feigned ignorance and did not mention that the Shreveport Times had 'phoned last night to ask if all the several thousand students at the college had been advised to go to their homes for the weekend. With all the anti-Administration blasts coming from southern papers like the Shreveport Times, it would be understandable enough if crack-brained hill billies or equally unendowed negro youths should find lots of excuses to start something. The Walkers are spending the weekend at a Black Lake lodge, ostensibly for an opportunity for their son to enjoy a round of fishing but Clara Genung the boy's grandmother, indicated on the 'phone that she supposed the reason for going was to provide fill-in for the boy who in the past has always attended the light festivities. I should think the 12 or 13 year old boy could be told simply enough that in view of possible disorders, it would be just as well to avoid crowds over the weekend but perhaps everybody wanted an outing and used this weekend as a good time to make the most of the final autumnal season out of doors.

James here an invitation from Kay to me, asking me to join them with the Charleston ladies, etc., to break bread Sunday noon at the Country Club. I shall go but should prefer remaining here but I can't ever seem to get such a strange notion across to anybody.....

12126

Sunday, December 2nd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Lovely weather throughout the weekend. Tonight my radio mentioned Lyme as having had a fair day with a thermometer ground 50. Locally it was like that but perhaps 15 degrees warmer.

Everything apparently went off nicely in town during Saturday's doings. I shall get Celeste's report on the morrow, as I did not see her today.

James came for me about 12:30 this noon and we picked Kay up in Pecan Park and drove directly to the Country Club where I. S. Willard, Aunt Willie and Mrs. Crabtree were awaiting us. I believe Aunt Willie had started eating but as we all finished before she did, that was perhaps just as well. Kay, as hostess, sat at the head of the table, Leston on her right, Aunt Willie next, then I. S. Willard, James and Mrs. Crabtree. I thought we would begin with a Martini but nothing but ice tea and coffee were served. The feed was excellent, --turkey, dressing, an excellent salad and dessert. Most of the diners had left before we began and so we weren't interrupted too many times by such people as Mr. and Mrs. Alton Lambre, Mrs. and Mrs. Robinson, once of Magnolia, Arkansas but now of Hatchiteches and so on.

James, on arriving here, presented me on Aunt Willie's behalf with a bottle of imported Sautern. James said Kay is utterly exhausted and that he would be glad to drive Mesdames Stern and Crabtree down here with me following dinner if he could persuade Kay to go home and rest which he did and I. S. Willard driving her to Pecan Park.

The episodes at dinner were impressive, once when somebody in the Administration section thought we would enjoy music and started music going, an outlet being over our table that impelled Aunt Willie to make a vast show of annoyance that sent I. S. Willard scurrying to get the music out off. The second highpoint was reached when I. S. Willard undertook a story.....



12127

Both Aunt Willie and James had related some amusing ones and it was evident from the start that I. W. Willard's would be longer and there were lots of "errrrrrs....." and "uuhhhhhhhhs....." between words and phrases. I think I was not the only one who was utterly lost before the thing was half completed but when we approached the punch line, I. S. W. suddenly interjected the surprising phrase, "Oh, I forgot to say at the beginning....." and what she had omitted, of course, was the point of the whole tale that, in the omission, utterly killed the story but the lapse was so characteristic that it sent all of us into gales of laughter and for a time it appeared both James and I would never get control of ourselves which I. S. W. interpreted as the finest kind of flattery so that her pleasure and the effect of her efforts far exceeded anything that even a rattling good story could have ever hoped to have scored.

The balance of the afternoon at this bend of the river was altogether pleasant. We struck out directly for Ghana, after passing through the big house. The dog chased Mr. Carroll for entertainment as the tour progressed. Aunt Willie had never seen a Candleabra Bush before so no wonder she couldn't imagine what it was like from my letters. She yearned for seeds and seeds were forthcoming. She fancied a dipper gourd and that was forthcoming, too. At Yucca where we collapsed for a pleasant half hour, we tried the Sautern and found it excellent. Then James invited the ladies to head out for a look at the far side of the river to see the church and then, glancing back across the river by the bridge, to see the camp from afar, and when they got back to town, as I learned around 8 o'clock, the lights were already glowing and so they did a tour of the town and everybody was merry when he handed the ladies down at the Willard residence and the Registers partook of supper by themselves at home. The important thing about the day was the taking of esdames Storm and Crabtree into the country, --the first time, I believe, that James has piloted the ladies anywhere and with just the four of us for the outing, everybody got a chance to relax and I think both the gentleman and the lady were fully if not more sympathetically inclined toward each other than previously which strikes me as all to the good.

Much more to chatter about but I had better let this do for the moment but I shall resume anon. I hold the thought there was a measure of relaxation if not rest at Lyme.....

12128

Sunday, December 3rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Lovely is the weather.

Eventually I must take a turn in the Ghana garden before the waning moon slips behind the western horizon for the air is delightful and the pungent odors of the newly ploughed parterres will smell wonderful and the black cats will love a turn there and a frolic with Mr. Carroll, the white rabbit.

I had several reports on the Saturday festivities and everyone thought the day darling. Celeste reported on having been at Mildred Cunningham's house along with Juanita A., and having taken her over to the I. S. Willard house to say goodby all around. Aunt Willie had mentioned that Celeste had passed that way on Saturday afternoon and had brought her sister along. I assumed Celeste's companion to have been Dee Hertzog but naturally didn't bother to inquire.

The Charles Cunninghams entertained on Saturday night at a small party, according to Carmen who attended the doings. There were three generations of Payne Breazeales there, having come up en masse from Baton Rouge. Madam Beaufort was also present as were Mr. and Mrs. Lynn Holleman of Alexandria. You may remember the name of Ethel Holleman who is Mrs. Lynn Holleman. Ethel had married a Mr. Harding somewhere along the line and beget a very dull boy by that union. Then, following a divorce from Harding, Ethel married Mr. Holleman, much her senior. Now it seems that Mr. and Mrs. Holleman have adopted Ethel's five year old granddaughter, leading me to assume that the Harding, Jr., marriage went on the rocks or some such. I think Lynn Holleman is about Blythe's age which is about 75 which seems fairly advanced in years for adopting a five year old child.

I think I did not mention or perhaps I did that one night last week a college girl and her boy friend were parked in the Grand Ecure neighborhood when they were accosted by a gentleman who held the



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youth in front of the headlights at the point of a revolver while the assailant raped the girl which must have been quite an operation. Tonight's local radio reported that a suspected white gentleman had been taken into custody and I suppose there will be more about that by the time Thursday's paper appears.

James dropped in this afternoon. He and Kay plan to drive Mesdames Storm und Crabtree to Shreveport tomorrow noon. The latter ladies will remain in a motel there overnight and catch an 8 o'clock plane on Wednesday morning for Charleston. Something tells me I.S. Willard is going to be a mighty busy girl on the afternoon of the morrow, transferring her personal effects from the upper floor she has been occupying to the main floor where Mesdames Storm und Crabtree have been holding down the telephone, ice box and whatever I have no idea how the South Carolina ladies will feel about their return to home base but I'll bet a dollar la Willard's theme song for tomorrow afternoon is most certainly going to be "Home Sweet Home".

The Walkers spent a weekend on Black Lake where Ken, senior, caught a 5 pound bass, Ken, junior a 3 pound bass and dropped his father's favorite rod into the bottom of the lake while Madam Walker knocked off a couple of editorials, indicating that the outing had its measure of success although the rod loss doesn't fall into that category exactly.

There were a couple of references to Madam General today. First it is said she has been making ever increasing use of the bottle during recent years. This undoubtedly in part explains Friday's tempest in a teapot. I shouldn't be surprised if lots of society matrons, interested in nothing but themselves, frequently resort of the bottle with a view to escaping their boredom with themselves. I feel especially sorry for the husband who has always deserved something better.....

12130

83151

Tuesday, December 4th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Another lovely summer's day, notable alike for today's brilliant sunshine and tonight's splendid moon. The thermometer stood at 67 this morning and moved up into the 80's as the day advanced. Many bushes which discarded their leaves last month have started putting out tender green new ones but Jack Frost will take care of all that one of these night ere long.

I laughed in my heard today at a fine example of how news travels although in this particular instance there wasn't anything particularly secret about the item. When pushing stuff around last August or September or whenever to make way for the painters at Yucca, I stacked a heap of odds and end, including a picture given me last Christmas by Mrs. R. B. Williams, one in her ante bellum costume taken on the back gallery. This afternoon when passing through the big house, I encountered the three painters still working here. They were having coffee and one of them said that one weekend recently he had done some work for Mr. R. B. Williams and in the room where he had been doing the painting, he had noticed a photograph that impressed him and he remarked upon it to Mr. Williams, telling him he had seen one just like it in Lestan's bathroom. Oh, brother.

One thing is certain, it must be admitted that aside from whatever virtues these painters possess, one of them at least has a keen eye and facile tongue. I haven't any idea how Mrs. Williams received the news from her husband but I do know that even now as several times since this afternoon's brush with the decorators, I have giggled mightily.

James called tonight around 8. I congratulated him on the excellence of the weather he and his three ladies had in making their trip to Shreveport today. He explained that only the South Carolina ladies had accompanied him as Kay had felt it better to remain in bed. He said the



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trip up had begun around 11:30 and he installed the ladies in a pretty motel and had dined with them and everything went off delightfully. Kay must have felt pretty down to have skipped that journey.

I had dropped Kay a note on Monday, thanking her for Sunday's entertainment at the Country Club on Sunday and I gather she must have received the letter today since James said Kay was still in the bed and therefore wouldn't talk with me until she was up and about on the morrow but she did want James to tell me that it was I. S. Willard who had given the party. on Sunday. This will give me an opportunity to write another note to thank another lady for the hospitality that I had supposed another lady engineered. The invitation to me was conveyed by James who said Kay had started to write me but that he would deliver the message in person which he did indeed do. Sometime after that, however, it seems the girls, --Kay and I. S. W. got their heads together and the upshot of their cotillion was that I. S. W. would give the Country Club dinner on Sunday. I thought Kay sat at the head of the table but as most oblong tables may be said to have two heads and as I. S. W. sat at the end opposite Kay, perhaps she and not Kay was the hostess. Be that as it may, I. S. W. never issued an invitation to me and I most certainly accepted Kay's bid. The important thing is that the dinner was wonderful and unwittingly I. S. Willard was the belle of the ball by her remarkable story that just about wrecked everybody present.

My agents on the town front report that the gentleman who raped the college girl was been taken, --son of a white carpenter, a young gentleman already possessed of a police record. The young lady who was raped chanced to be a sister of a former deputy sheriff, recently resigned from his post. Would-be rapers would be well advised, I should imagine, if someone pointed out to same that it would be just as well to rape a young lady whose family isn't quite so close to the law enforcement organization.

I think I mentioned the acquisition of a new gander yesterday. This morning he was still sulking in his corner and nothing Louella could do by way of exerting her charms would induce the aforesaid gander to be-stir himself. I did persuade him to take a couple of sips of water but he steadfastly disdained cracked corn. He is fat, however, and may survive on same until he has a change of heart, I hope.

My 9 o'clock coffee hostess was in town this morning and so I did not see her. I know not if she is at home tonight. J. H. is in New Orleans and it may be Celeste remained abroad until the morrow. I am going to

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12132

Wednesday, December 5th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Another day and night as brilliant as the previous 24 hours but different in thermometer readings. A 30 mile wind came blowing out of the north before dawning so that yesterday's mid 80's tumbled to the 50's, in spite of the dazzling sunshine and something tells me Jack Frost will be making his rounds before tomorrow's dawn.

I understand J. H. returned from New Orleans and other places down that way around 4 o'clock this afternoon but he did not come to supper, saying he had eaten too much while in the Crescent City. A truck left here this morning about 4 to meet J. H. somewhere around St. Martinsville or some such place where it was loaded with some 800 pecan trees. I suppose it may be back by now --9:30 p.m. I have never seen pecan trees planted in quantity and shall be interested to observe the doings on the morrow. I understand some sort of a mechanical hole digger is employed, probably like a fence post hole digger but deeper. I assume the tree is placed in the hole and the good earth filled in around it but whether this be done by hand or otherwise, I haven't any idea. It will be easy enough for me to observe operations since it is said the former cotton fields between here and the bridge, hard by the Rand-Register camp is to be planted with all the trees that 40 odd acres will hold. I suppose several hundred trees will be set out on the plantation across the river from the store.

In contrast to the numbers of trees planted east of her in the direction of Little and Red Rivers, the field between the cotton gin and the camp will seem small enough but will appear large as the open expanse begins to find itself enclosed from the sky when the trees get to growing.



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12133

Tomorrow's local papers will carry a report of the death by drowning in Cane River in front of the town by a college youth. The newspaper accounts will not include in their accounts, however, that the youth who drown was drunk a few weeks back on a Saturday night when one of his classmates succeeded in getting the drunken one into a car so that he could be taken home. It was this friend who was shot and killed a few minutes after he had engineered the boy into the car. On returnin to sobriety several hours later, the intoxicated one learned of the death of his friend and is said to have been deeply depressed ever since, feeling that it was his drunken state that brought forth the youth to assist him and therefore became the target of the gun shot. On Friday, the depressed one met some of his college friends at 8:30, when the friends, --two boys and three college girls, were crossing the bridge in front of the town. They all chatted together for a few minutes after which the depressed one parted from them, saying he was going to drown himself in the river. They all laughed and went their way but, by golly, the depressed one did just that..

Neither the shooting of a few weeks back nor the drowning of Friday took place on the campus, the fact that both victims were students brings the name of Northwestern sharply into the picture. Accordingly the President felt moved to appeal to the local press to slant the story in such a way as it would not play up the institution too much and John took himself to the Enterprise to confer about the news coverage with Mrs. Walker. It does seem remarkable that the body of the drowned youth should have been in the water, slap in the middle of Saturday's light festival on Saturday, with herds of people, perhaps fifty or sixty thousand people, concentrating their attention on the pageant along the river bank during the afternoon, and the reflection of the lights all evening. It is remarkable, too, that the body should have remained for five in the placid waters of the river, right in the heart of town and the focal point of all the weekend festivities. I crossed the bridge twice last Sunday and remarked to Aunt "illie how wonderfully clear and limid the river appeared.

I am happy to report that the new gander, although still shy whenever Louella attempts to look after him, is beginning to prance about a bit. Whenever one enters his province, however, he immediately sits right down on the ground, playin' 'possum", as my friends point out.....

12134

Thursday, December 6th, 1962.

Memorandum:

A marvelous day and if one had a newspaper and not very good sense, he could read it by moonlight, so bright glews the wzzing moon. There was a sharp frost, thermometer around 29 this morning. It knocked out the zinnias in the Ghana circle and set the banana leaves to drooping. By afternoon, under the brilliant sun, the juice in the banana stalks began fermenting giving a pungent aroma not unlike fermenting wine. It will be freezing again tonight but start warming on the morrow, it is said.

I was delighted to find in today's post an air mail from Lyme under Tuesday's dateline, containing many pleasant things I want to re-read plus the clipping covering the destruction by fire of the Pea Patch which somehow had escaped me.

It was so kind of you to mention the points about the reference to Lydia Lee and to give me additional particulars regarding Mrs. R.'s will. The day was such a jangle of interruptions after noon that I never could get to run through a single piece of mail at one sitting and people present during the entire afternoon precluded returning to correspondence.

I was busy with folks trying to get things swept clean in the Ghana section when James arrived about 2. I believe it was n3arly 5 before he left although there were other people I had to attend to during that 3 hour period.

Celeste called to say the Jarued Pratt's aunt, Mrs. Murphy of Eldorado, were in the offing and she simply didn't have time to see them and would I. I asked her to call me when they arrived. She did not but rather came over here with them, leaving them at the pet, for what reason I know not, and entered the Yucca living room in a rush, forgetting to speak to James. I accompanied her to meet the gentleman and five ladies making up the party, all said to be possessed of considerable wealth, including the aforesaid Mrs. Murphy who gave the several thousand dollars to the Hysterical Ladies a year or so ago. The ladies, with one possible exception, a Mrs. Brown, were pretty dumb but I



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did what I could for them although they themselves didn't try too hard to go along with me. I had to laugh in my own heart at the way they fleeced me for, as I explained to James after they had one: "You really have to watch these millionaires".

James had just told me the seed store in town is selling gourds at \$.75 or \$1.00, gourds of ordinary types. The visiting ladies wanted gourds and I gave each of them one. Another lady wanted various types of seeds, --cucumbers, sweet basil and so on and I gave her an amount that the seed store would probably have charged her about \$3.00. There was a bit of getting of heads together as the tour drew to a close at the side gate and I explained I should be unable to go on to Celeste's with them for coffee as I had a guest waiting me, and after some hush-hush, the millionaires labored and brought forth a dollar which they presented to me. Verily, one must keep an eye on the millionaire even though my tour and gifts weren't destined to have a price tag attached.

James said Aunt Willie called from the Bluff last evening to say she and la Crabtree had made it home safely. They had left Shreveport in sunshine, encountered mighty rough weather over Georgia but had come down in South Carolina in sunshine once more. He said Kay is spending tonight at the Natchitoches hospital where the lady doctor is going to run some tests and Kay will return home tomorrow, --Pecan Park. I suggested James talk with the lady doctor if possible but I knew not if he will. I believe both husband and physician have about the same notion as to the difficulties, --illness induced by imagination. When patients think they simply must hang on to their up-sets, it is probably an uphill job divesting them of same.

In the midst of the afternoon doings, Mrs. Walker called to say the Shreveport special features editor and another writer want to pass this way on Saturday afternoon with a view, I suppose, to getting some sort of a primitive art story. I held the thought other Shreveport people may not hit on the same time for a visitation.....

12136

16131

Friday, December 7th, 1962.

Memorandum:

A slight frost last night gave way to warmer weather today. The skies are brilliant around the clock as I shiver to think of the reports of wintry weather along the east coast.

I put a set of tiles in the post today for little Miss Lee who already HAS THE Harvest one I believe, but I thought perhaps she might find use for a duplicate in that department. From where I sit, I think I shall not get a Christmas gift going in the direction of Lyme before the holidays have run their course. Things in that department got a little snarled up but probably I'll eventually get caught up with same and I, for one, bemoan the disappointment.

At the coffee hour this morning I was treated to a playing of the First Family or whatever is the title of the new disc about the Kennedys. I thought the voice of person playing the President exceptional in its resemblance to the Chief Executive. I have heard Mrs. Kennedy's voice only once or twice a couple of years back and then only two or three sentences and so I cannot judge how the record compares with actuality. Because the record humanizes, albeit in a humorous way, the apex of our Governmental and social pyramid, I am under the impression it will probably tend to popularize the people impersonated. I am curious to know if people thus portrayed are required to give their assent to such a disc. While this one seems to be alright, another one, less skilfully handled, might be something quite different, I should think, and might tend to give an erroneous and damaging impression. I have no doubt there are protective statutes on the books but that is only a guess on my part. Somehow I feel these who dislike the first family, --the conservative Republican, the Bible slappers and so on may well try their respective or joint hands in attempting a similar disc falsifying the personalities impersonated but probably libel laws already on the books would take care of such efforts.



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12137

Following the playing of the disc, mine hostess asked me how I liked yesterday's visitors whom the J. Pratts brought. I said a couple of them were alright but I thought at least one of the other ladies was cracked. She said she felt so, too, and that the Pratts had been distressed at the potentials in the person of one of the ladies who, among other things, took a couple of slaps at Catholics which naturally didn't endear the speaker to Celeste.

I didn't hear from the Registers today but I assume Kay is back home, even as she had intended to be. By dialling Hatchiteches 4498, --the Register number, and getting a busy signal, and then dialling 3235 which is I. S. Willard's, one gets what sounds to be the same busy signal, reminding me that it has been said that when these two girls once get a connection through, a busy signal is likely to result over an ensuing period of 2 or 3 hours.

Well, now, as President Eisenhower might ejaculate, Well, now....James just called to say Kay is feeling fine and remaining another night in the hospital. He said he had just received a call from the Bluff and Aunt Willie asked James to tell me she would like a likeness of Lestan to grace her mantlepiece. And no sooner did I hang up than I. S. Willard called to say so many things, including an invitation or the threat of an invitation for Christmas dinner that would include J. H. and Celeste which I immediately discouraged for a dozen reasons although I kept a sort of rain check for myself with the Registers. I. S. Willard, in recalling the past couple of weeks, said that now, after her guests had departed, understood how enervating the presence of the elder lady is bound to be on the younger lady and that at long last she realized exactly how James felt on that subject. And so that is that and it's time for me to get to the mail and thence to my downy couch.....

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12138

Sunday, December 9th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold, 50 by day, upper 20's by night and the biggest, roundest moon you can imagine.

Saturday went off very nicely. James arrived at 2:10 in the afternoon, just five minutes before I had told Mrs. Walker I would meet her and the Shreveport Times people at the side gate. I gave James a letter to glance through. It was from somebody in Los Angeles, ordering a Hunter canvas, some of the details had not come through clearly to me from a quick secretarial run through. James did not sit down and we started out the door when the guests arrived. Presentations were made all around and James departed and I got the tour going for the two Times ladies while Mrs. Walker busied herself with her camera. The Special Features editor and the other lady from some other department struck me as too young and too inexperienced for their job. A tossed off six or eight different story possibilities for the impending color printing the Times is preparing to bring forth. The young ladies seemed impressed but did not, I think, grab at the several embryo articles dangled before them. They took no notes. We concluded our go-round at Yucca where we had a pleasant hour of talk, done mostly by Lestan with a view to introducing more possible Special Features and rounding out details of the ideas planted along the tour. Everybody seemed to have a good time but of what value the whole business may have been, I wouldn't know. They left a little after 4, paying a visit on the local artist from whom they purchased half a dozen pictures and that was that.

Natalie 'phoned me this morning, expressing delight at the receipt of a lovely letter from little Miss Lee. She had one or two scholastic and



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social points she wanted to touch on. She had attended one of the teas given by I. S. Willard for the lady from South Carolina. She said it was so evident the South Carolina lady did things, such as jumping up and down on her frail ankles, not so much with a view to putting on a show, perhaps, as to twist the nerves of her niece, so concerned with auntie's health. Natalie gathered from an aside made by Mrs. Crabtree that while the South Carolina physicians found everything physically sound about the elderly lady, the physicians were careful not to tell the lady or her family that the elderly one could drop dead any time. I suppose as much might be said about anyone but the 91 years probably incline the patient toward a greater hazard.

Just before I went to dine across the fence this noon, James called to say that he and Kay would like to have me dine with them. If I expected to be home, they would come down about 2 which they did, taking me for a little ride, and thence to Pecan Park for a chat. About 10 minutes after our arrival, Kay withdrew and two hours later, James reported her as exhausted and in a deep sleep. We chatted another couple of hours when he awakened her so we might prepare to the Town House for supper but she said she was too tired and so he and I went around to the restaurant and dined. Returning to Pecan Park, he found the lady up and about and she came out on the gallery to bid me good night and James brought me home. Natalie in her conversation had observed that several people she knew in town had given up attempts at further contacts since none of them knew when to contact the lady and nobody could make any plans for teas, dinners or whatever. It would appear that I. S. Willard and Lestan are about the only two friends they see much of and that seems to satisfy them.

I. S. Willard called me Saturday night to bid me join with the Registers, Ada Jack Carver and another one or two people at Christmas dinner at the Willard residence. I should be delighted to skip the family concentration here but am not sure I should feel like devoting an entire afternoon or evening to such a concourse. I have long felt that Christmas is a lovely time to spend at one's home but I must be wrong since nobody else seems to want to stay put or expect you to, either.

And so, what with the night advancing, I must get busy and gallop up and down this keyboard a bit and then call it a day. I hope it hasn't been too dizzy a one at Lyme.....

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Monday, December 10th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold. In some places last night the thermometer around this section of the State sagged to 20. I guess it was 25 here. Under a brilliant sun today it inched upward to about 50 and tonight under a full moon and cloudless sky, it will probably go down to freezing again.

On Saturday I saw Joe at the store. He asked if there were nandina bushes for his Pecan Park property, to which I responded affirmatively. This noon at dinner, Dan asked if there were nandinas, large and small banana roots and other things for him. I said there were. He said he would send Sam Brown to dig them in the morning and a truck would gather them up at noon. I have heard that before and so the two men I had working in the morning transplanting Chinese magnolias were switched to digging nandinas, bananas and so on all afternoon.

At dinner J. H. had asked if the frost had got the bananas. I said Jack Frost had. He said he would send trucks for them to be hauled out on the morrow. I cut many this afternoon while the men were digging. I tried to forget that Mrs. Walker had called me this morning to ask if she could have two Cane River Memo manuscripts to take care of the holiday confusion that will ensue when Christmas comes on Tuesday and the paper comes out on Wednesday night.

At 2 o'clock James appeared. I suspended operations to chat with them but he grudgingly the time. Two minutes before he arrived, I noticed Sister's car at the side gate. There were lots of other



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minor matters to get the day rounded out, including the return of Ezra and Clyde Claude Emmett Davis from South Louisiana where they had gone this morning to haul homepecan saplings. The owners of the nursery, as a kind of lanyap, I suppose, sent along four grapevines and a lemon tree. I suppose these were intended for J. H. who turned them over to me. I like the lemon tree and can use it in my business but as I spend most of my life digging up grapevines, I certainly don't need four new ones. The trouble with grapevines in this lush region is the fact that they grow too luxuriantly, sweeping over the tallest trees and winding up bamboo hedges before you can turn around. The grapes produced around here are fine if one has the time to keep abreast with the clutters as they begin to produce sizeable fruit whereupon one must put a paper or a cellophane sack over each cluster, and usually it is wiser to put a second sack over the first one, since the birds who would eat all of the grapes if not thus protected, will peck a hole through the first sack and then, finding nothing but another sack inside, will go on to tastier food and I for one have enough birds in the peacock, guinea, pheasant, goose departments without taking on the bluejays, cardinals, mocking birds and warblers.

After Clyde Claude Emmet Davis left for South Louisiana this morning, word came that his mama had died. I didn't know if he had learned about it before he did Ezra appeared with the bucketed grapevines and lemon. I shall see him on the morrow to extend a gesture of sympathy..

So turns the day and so I head into the night, realizing I had better knock off a column while it is quiet if I ever hope to get ahead of tomorrow's confusion and a couple of fronts.....

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Tuesday, December 11th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Clear and cold. I couldn't get any report about Lyme in tonight's weather reports but since the whole country is said to be chilly I suppose it probably is in Lyme, too. I hope the snow which seems to be everywhere else in that region has skipped it. Our low tonight will be about 20, it is said.

It was breezy today but I kept pretty much on the jump and so didn't mind the sting of the wind. A truck load of stuff went to Pecan Park at noon, immediately following dinner which was a dull enough sitting. J. H. remained only long enough for a dab of squirrel gumbo and after he left, a coolness settled down over the table since Dan and Sister are not on happy terms.

The 800 pecan trees have been planted, -- a goodly number in the cotton field stretching between the gin and the Rand-Register camp. Ezra passed this way this afternoon to fix a deer and said the new orchard might be styled the Pecan Park of Melrose. Since the Registers live in the Natchitoches Pecan Park and have their camp in the Melrose one, they ought to feel quite at home in which ever place they chance to find themselves.

I talked with Clara Genung yesterday. She had asked the lady doctor to make a house call on her as Clara doesn't like the lady doctor's office. Clara said that in chatting with the lady doctor, the latter had told her I was mad at her for not having sent me a bill a few years back when I had some elbow dealings and therefore I wouldn't take a shot for Asian flu. I hear lots of preposterous statements from our present visitor but none more so than that one. So far as I know, I was never mad at the lady doctor and as for Asian flu shots, I am not interested in them since I am inclined to feel that too many shots might set up immunities that would tend to



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dilute effectiveness of subsequent ones  
when one really needed them. Perhaps Eleanore was  
merely giving Clara a little ride.

A slight interruption between this and the  
above paragraph. It was James calling  
to report on his activities which included  
a go-round down this way this afternoon. He said he  
saw a Shreveport car at the side gate,  
and decided then and there that I might have  
enough by way of entertaining on my hands, --and he  
was so right, --and accordingly kept right  
on going. I know not what he has  
by way of heating facilities at the camp but I  
imagine the place must be somewhat "air-ish" when  
the thermometer is down and the wind high. He  
said he stopped to call on the artist and had  
a pleasant chat with her. She reported her granddaddy  
er, Willie, of Baton Rouge is coming with her two offspring  
to spend Christmas. Willie had written her  
mama, Jackie, but Jackie had responded  
that with Junior having taken a companion to  
share his room with him, there wouldn't  
be much room for Willie and her two children.  
The artist, on hearing of this, dictated a letter  
for Willie, telling her to come and stay with her and  
so there will be grandchildren and great grandchildren about  
the artist's hearth this season of Yuletide.

James reported things as being snug at his house  
and remarked that the weather map for today  
indicated 31 degrees for Miami, Florida, and 46 for  
Anchorage, Alaska which is certainly impressive by  
way of juxtaposition.

And so things shape up for the pre-holiday  
season and now I must give the two black cats a saucer of hot  
milk and then get busy with some mail.....

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Wednesday, December 12th, 1962.

Memorandum;

Clear and cold, --18 last night, below freezing  
all day and headed for another 18 tonight.

I am happy to report that our visitor went home  
today. J. H. told Celeste Sister wants to keep a  
room here so she may stay here when not using her apartment  
in Shreveport which she might take if she sells her house.  
Celeste says she will take an apartment in town if  
Sister comes here. I should think that would  
be an excellent idea. When all this is expected to  
happen, I wouldn't know.

Sister was terribly distressed this morning because J. H.  
took Celeste, his wife, to some party given by one of his  
banks or some such, instead of taking his Sister.

She spoke with me for the first time about her  
drunken driving spree in Baton Rouge last summer  
although the picture she painted was a horse of another hue.  
According to her, she had an accident in Baton Rouge and  
the police found a couple of empty whiskey bottles in  
her car. Naturally she couldn't tell the police the  
bottles were not hers but had been planted there by  
S. G. Enry's wife since she didn't want to get  
her brother into difficulties and so she nobly took the  
rap and permitted the Court to suspend her driver's license.

She says she hasn't any friends because she is unlucky  
and people don't like to be friends with unlucky people.  
She says further, however, that because Celeste and I  
live at Velrose, we have friends and that if she lived here  
she would have friends. She was counting Celeste and me in  
on that one, I hope.

Such toomfoolery gets tiresome soon enough and I hold



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the thought we may be spared another visitation for  
a couple of weeks or so.

The weather being too cold for out of door labors,  
the cutting and hauling of banana plants was suspended and  
I was glad I had cut only as they were being ahuled since  
the handling of these standing erect will be carried out  
so much more readily when work is resumed.

Camen called this morning and confided something to me  
that almost made me wonder if she was hoping I would  
pass the word along to everyone even as does she when told something  
in confidence. She started off by saying Charles  
Cunningham had contacted her to remind her that  
the 250 anniversary of the founding of Hatchiteches  
comes up in 1964 and that although his brother,  
Peyton, whom Charles can't stand, is chairman of the  
celebration, nothing has been heard about his plans  
and that Charles says the thing can't be a success unless he,  
that is to say Charles, Carmen and Nita, are properly designated  
to run the whole thing. How much of that is  
attributable to Charles and how much to Carmen, I  
can only guess. As for Nita, whenever figures in  
anything except as Carmen's second fiddle. I think the  
whole stir may be based on the fact that both Charles and  
Carmen are jealous of Peyton's wife, Mildred, and  
wouldn't mind taking on lots of work of which Carmen is  
capable and Charles is not, for the double  
satisfaction of directing the whole celebration and  
at the same time putting Mildred in the shade.  
I find it wonderful what motives impell people to  
scramble for the front pew.

So often these days I find myself thinking  
of metropolitan subway riders, wondering if they are getting  
caught up on their reading, now the newspapers are  
no longer available and how many iterations, little  
and large, somehow creep into daily existence without the  
daily source of information.....

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Thursday, December 12th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and continued cold with a slight tendency toward easing  
off tonight. Last night it was about 14 but lots of  
places around were more chilly and Mobile, for instance,  
was 11.

Day before yesterday two wedges of geese passed  
over head, flying quite low, and going, --  
of all directions, North. What their destination may have  
been, I cannot imagine but I assume they must have  
been making a detour to see if they could find a  
slit through the frozen curtain through which they  
could slip.

Because of the confusion around here in the morning at  
the coffee hour, I didn't mentioned Christmas  
dinner until today. As Celeste is having the Joe  
Henry's and possibly the seniors as well as the  
juniors, not to mention some other guests, I think  
my presence will scarcely be noted although Celeste was  
sweet about saying that if I changed my mind,  
I knew quite well there was always a place for me at the board.

I was busy in the Ghana section around 1 o'clock  
when who suddenly appeared by I. S. Willard. It  
was the first time I had seen her since she had invited me  
to dine at her home with Kay, James, Ada Jack Carver Snell and  
so on, at 1:30 on Christmas afternoon.

I mentioned how kind I thought it was of her to invite me  
and was mildly taken aback when she said she thought  
it was going to be so nice supping at 7 on Christmas night.  
Oh, Lord.

She remained until 4, after which I be-took myself  
to the store where the clerk asked me if I had seen James.  
The clerk said James had driven into Celeste's yard but apparantly



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had sighted a car by the side gate, and backed right out. The clerk said perhaps James thought it was Sister's car. I agreed. Knowing James as I do, however, I am quite sure he is quite well acquainted with Sister's white car and I. S. Willard's dark car.

It seems to me there was a Sunday dinner a while back about some revelations were made as to the identity of the hostess, after I had written my Thank You note to the wrong person. I was given to understand by a gentleman acquainted with both ladies that the invitation had indeed been issued by one who intended giving the dinner but somehow between the two ladies they worked out a different plan without informing anyone and I take it to be the switch around in the hour from 1:30 to 7 o'clock must be another example of particulars on the agenda changed without advising those hidden to the repast. As for myself, as of this moment, I doubt if I shall venture forth at that hour, not because I have any objection to having Christmas dinner at night but simply because I don't think much of one of the other guests present having to drive me home at some ridiculous hour and then having to return to town after that dubious hour. We shall see what we shall see, as the saying has it.

I was interested in hearing Mr. Kennedy start off his news conference yesterday with a statement concerning the trip that Mona Lisa is about to make to New York and Washington. I am all in favor of good pictures coming within sight of people the world around and although comparatively few people will get to see the pictures, -- that is comparatively few people making up the population of the United States, still all the people in the country will hear plenty about the event on TV, I suppose, and undoubtedly the press and especially the magazines, will have much to say about the picture, its painter and so on and I think that is all to the good and I must knock off a column tonight on La Lisa although I cannot think what I

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Friday, December 14th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy and much warmer. A freeze last night put the thermometer in the mid 20's before morning but during the afternoon it rose to about 70 and the promise is for another warm day on the morrow, followed by another cold snap early in the week.

I am happy we glaze the balance of the banana stalks cut and hauled out before they collapsed and the rains soaked them.

I can't seem to think what kept me on this machine last night but I suppose there were a flock of odds and ends in the correspondence field. I did knock off a column, something about Mona Lisa but that didn't take any time as it was merely jotting down a thought or two about that lady's career that a few people like little Miss Lee will enjoy wading through even though it be nothing more than the enumeration of a few names and places which sometimes, when familiar, as in little Miss Lee's case, is sufficient.

I guess I sometimes tuck things in columns in full realization that most of the readers will not be interested but in spite of that I am impelled to do so because I assume there may be one reader or another who, like me, never tired of reading something that contained a common word, a person's or place's name, unfamiliar to me because it invariably whetted my appetite to dig into some source for information so that while the article itself was of no special interest, I felt rewarded because through its prodding, I got around to explore new avenues which up until then, had not been traversed or explored and no wine was ever so heady as the one intoxicating one when setting out to the dictionary, Larousse or some person capable of supplying me with particulars.



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As I listened to the news tonight, I repeated to myself that old line about more and more people knowing more and more about less and less and less and less people, like me, understanding little or nothing. It was the account of the rocket passing the planet Venus this afternoon and taking her temperature, estimated at 600 plus degrees. As the closest the rocket came to the planet was 21 thousand miles, I can only marvel at the length of that thermometer. Most people I know find it hot enough on this earth when the thermometer hits 125 degrees and so I suppose some agency or other may well now be busily engaged in building refrigerator suits, air conditioning units and the Lord knows what all for enthusiastic would-be visitors to Venus. I am not one to start standing in line for that Jules Verne thriller.

James appeared at 11:30 this noon and remained for dinner. I asked him about the Christmas dinner hour and the names appearing on the guest list. He said he got his news from Kay and when we compared it with what I. S. Willard had reported to me, there were two or three points that didn't seem to jibe. Even as I, so James had understood until last night that Christmas dinner at Willard's was to be served at 1:30 but when I explained the hostess had mentioned 7 o'clock to me when she honored me with a visit yesterday, he said Kay had told him it would be served at 5. I suggested that we might do well to attend bearing a bottle of wine just in case the hour was again tinkered with, unbeknown to us, the bottle thereby supplying some sort of a fill in for whatever magical moment was finally set fourth. I. S. W. had mentioned to me that Ada Jack and somebody else was to be among those present. James told me Kay had told him that I. S. W. had reported we should be but four. James said that I. S. Willard and Kay had had an endless 'phone conversation last night with Kay doing the 'Oh's' and the 'Ah's' and the balance being taken care of by the other lady. After the conversation had concluded, James asked Kay if she would kindly tell him in twenty five thousand words or less what pivotal points had been settled but apparently nobody with the possible exception of I. S. Willard, seemed to have anything definite in mind. There was one interesting point, however, and that was the I. S. Willard on leaving her house yesterday noon, planning to head out directly for Baton Rouge for a few days of conference when her maid opined at the door that next week was the date and so it turned to be and so I got the visit instead of Baton Rouge.....

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Sunday, December 16th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Mild and pleasant, the current ~~car~~ temperature around 70 seeming like a heat wave after last week's cold snap.

The weekend has been unusually pleasant, the nicest thing about it being the lovely air mail from Lyme in Saturday's post. There were quite a few letters and cards in the same post but only the letter from Lyme received my attention and I loved every word of it. I'm so glad little Miss Lee liked the little tiles and I'm delighted the extra Harvest one can be used to such advantage. Writing under current pressures must be exceedingly difficult for little Miss Lee and I trust she will skip letters when attempting them are fraught with so many barriers, always knowing that silence at this end will always be interpreted as a sign that everything is being held against more peaceful auspices.

I didn't see a solitary pilgrim all weekend which, of course, delighted me. I didn't hear from the Registers either which means I did not have to go to town to dine this evening. I did hear from one or two people, --I. S. Willard, Mesdames Walker and Genung and so on but these merely constituted pleasant interludes of no particular moment.

There was a heavy fog that developed last evening at dusk-dark and Celeste reported this noon that she and Dee had found it very difficult to drive home around 6:30 or 7, following an afternoon at cards, chez Nez Chaplain. Celeste said that frequently the white line making the middle of the road was frequently out of sight although she could be guided in part by mail boxes along the road.

When I awakened this morning, I turned on my radio to determine the hour and to get the news. Both my portable hand wound timepieces having been unwound and



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hence not functioning. I was delighted to hear one or another of the ~~xxx~~ psalms being read in the familiar voice of Charles Laughton. I was so delighted that I dozed off to sleep again and didn't awaken until 5 o'clock when I got the hour, followed by the news of Mr. Laughton's death, the voice I had heard earlier, probably around 4 o'clock having, of course, been a recording. Mr. Laughton was my favorite actor and I naturally feel the world has lost a superb artist.

A slight interruption between this paragraph and the above, when, to my astonishment, a visitor suddenly appeared in the middle of the floor. Slipping the cushion over from the one I was sitting on, I tossed it over the unannounced guest and then deposited the cover and its contents into an African brass urn. It looked to me like a flying squirrel and I believe it is but the dawn's early light will reveal its true identity. How he arrived in the boudoir, I wouldn't know but his presence here reminds me that C. Biranwood Dermen once said she wouldn't live in a house where squirrels and birds couldn't come in to make their nests.

Pal, who gathered up cotton picking sacks from the galleries of folks up and down the river early this autumn and then spent a month in jail when trying to sell them for wine, appeared at my door this morning. I thought he seemed a little high which is natural on the plantation, especially the morning after Saturday night. He said he wanted to sell me a pair of fine ducks which he didn't have with him but, if I would give him the money for some then and there, he would fetch them on Monday morning. I thanked him for the offer but declined the bargain. Tonight, or rather late this evening when making a round of the Ghana garden to plan tomorrow's operations in that quarter, I noticed a recumbent figure beneath a pecan tree, -- Pal, of course, who must have found another buyer for somebody else's ducks. Poor Pal, poor ducks and probably poor henkey-tonk operator if the latter were foolish enough to advance Pal wet groceries on credit.....

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Monday, December 17th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Foggy through mid morning, followed by sunshine and mild weather for the balance of the day and tonight the heavens are star spangled.

The mail, naturally, is beginning to increase in volume as the holiday approaches and I find myself confronted with quite a stack of stuff which circumstances prevented me from getting around to when secretaries were available.

James came this afternoon and just as he exchanged Howdies with me, Blythe and Mrs. Brewer put in an appearance for Howdies to be exchanged all around. It was obvious both had just about the same amount of time to spend and as each set of visitors were intentionally or unintentionally determined to make the most of their visit by remaining as possible, nobody won and I felt somehow deprived of a satisfaction with any of the visitations which, had they not come at the same time, might have given me at least a greater measure of satisfaction.

I had no secrets to share with any of the visitors and I assume they had none to pass along to me but still conversations would have taken different course had there been less participants. When I handed Blythe to her car, she said Paul King would be down for Christmas and would undoubtedly like to pass this way to say Howdy and I said that would be fine. When I handed the gentleman to his car, he opined that he sensed a measure of disappointment on the part of the recent hospital patient when her lady physician informed her that all tests indicated satisfactory physical conditions, --which, indeed, must be distressing to one in the hypochondria bracket.

I learned that Kay is sending her two sisters, one from



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California, the other from Nevada, to share the holidays with the lady at the Bluff but whether that will please anybody concerned is problematical. I understand it is doubtful if one of the sister is likely to forget the fright the Bluff lady tried to put in her one day when the Bluff lady who was driving the car in which they were both riding, pointed out an approaching train and told her she would clip across the track before the train reached the crossing, a promise made good by dint of terrific speed stepped up by the driver of the car, certainly a hair-raising childish prank ill-becoming a matron in her late 80's.

Before leaving for Alexandria this morning for Mildred's coronation, Celeste called me to say that Mrs. Caruford Young of Campiti had called yesterday to ask about bringing some people here on Sunday afternoon and Celeste had told her neither she nor I would be here. Thereupon Mrs. Young asked about this morning and Celeste had said she thought I would be here. I was alerted on the matter of Mrs. Young's approach therewith but so far as I knew she never put in an appearance.

After 6 tonight, J. H. Williams and Joe Levy came by Melrose to pick up J. H. to drive to Boyce or Alexandria or some such place to attend a barbecue which, of course, is just another way of proceeding in the wake of trips to check-up centers where exhaustion is described as something to be avoided.

I was delighted one day last week when I received a card with a sweet note from Ida Meyer, Hotel Ruxton, 50 West 72nd Street, Manhattan. You may recall she is Sylvan Friedman's auntie who is forever traveling around the United States and withal a swell person. She remarked that following her return from Mexico City, she expected to spend but a little while being with friends in New York, after which she would go to California but instead, ended up in some real estate organization. How some gals in their 70's do get about..

I returned the flying squirrel to his out of doors this morning and we parted the best of friends.....

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Tuesday, December 18th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Foggy all morning. Fair and mild the balance of the day.

And today is Christmas, regardless of the calendar.

The postman presented me with a fine box this morning, one that, thanks to its expert packing, had traveled as neat as a pin and it didn't take me two minutes from the time I left the post office until I touched home base before I had Santa's pack well explored. First thing to catch my eye were the gayly colored potted plant designs on the Turkish towel assortment. It is so wonderfully cheerful and and cheery, I immediately had to drap them all about the place to enjoy the harmony the reversed patterns present as I wondered to myself why it was I had never before seen anything like it applied to this material, one reason probably being that it must be might difficult to achieve from the creator's point of view.

Then I came upon the box holding the sweet gilded bust of the angel of African origin and I was delighted to discover he was so constructed as to enable me to place him where ever I cared to place a hook and I think he is going to flap his wings in many a different locality although I have a feeling that if he ever remains any place any length of time, it will be right here over my desk, hard by the picture window. I find myself wondering where he was brought into being and by whom fashioned. This is the first time I have ever seen this representative of the Dark Continent in this form, accompanied by wings, and I find the whole business utterly charming and I love him.

The Festival of the Birds naturally delights me, too, and especially because one of our little friends is hiding there and the peacock is right up in front where nobody can possibly miss him. I notice this is a U.N. greeting



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card and I love it for its own beauty and for the cause it represents. It's going to share my desk all during the holidays and the holidays are going to mean so much more in consequence of the hours it will spend here beside my machine, dancing gayly with each tap of a key.

As for the 18th century pavillions, well, because little Miss Lee knows Lestan's tastes so well, words seem utterly inadequate for express my feelings when I caught sight of the cover, recognizing immediately, of course, the Pavillion de Musique at Petit rianen and feeling so contented just at the sight of it that even opening the volume seemed unnecessary for a long time. There is something so sweet about finding the various markers inserted at place where my attention was especially directed and I am leaving them right where they are so I may turn to each over and over again and, up to now, at least, I haven't taken time out to explore the others. They are all so charming, so exhilarating, so 18th century and to my complete pleasure that I cannot begin to convey my feelings. What really astenishes me that somebody should have been so inspired as to round up such a delightful collection of exquisite architectural gems and bind them together in such a thrilling collection.

Up until this writing I have had an opportunity to read only a few of the pages, so generously arranged, opposite each illustration and, I must confess, I am impatient to run through the whole collection at a single session with ever stopping. But circumstances demand prudence and I shall take the reading leisurely, as a courtesy to my reading friends, while in between such happy assistance, I shall be devouring the illustrations so that by the time I resume exploration of the text, I shall already have the individual buildings so well in mind that it will be unnecessary for me to look at the picture as the text expands.

It is such a happy Christmas, how can I hope to say Thank you. I guess I simply can't and yet instinctively I sense that little Miss Lee will understand because she shares the joys which, in reality,

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Wednesday, December 19th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Foggy until nearly 11 this morning, partly cloudy and mild this afternoon. Cloudy and mild tonight.

For dinner today we were six, --including J. H., because Celeste was in town, some plant doctor, Lloyd and his wife, Marguerite, the clerk and Lestan.

Marguerite continues to appear as a very nice person. "hat she is doing in the family she has taken on a marriage, I cannot imagine. They brought their son with them but he was parked with Celeste's servant during dinner and so I did not get to see him. I did encounter Lloyd following dinner, --he had left before demi-tasse time, and was prowling a round Yucca with the hound dog on a chain, --for it seems college young married folks must have babies and hounds but I don't keep up with such fashions and so it was all new to me.

At supper tonight, J. H. reported with amusement that Deetsie Baby, --Lloyd's sister, had called J. H. from Hatchiteches this afternoon, saying she was en route to Shreveport for the holidays. When asked why she hadn't made the trip with Lloyd in his car, Deetsie Baby explained that Lloyd charged her so much a mile to ride with him and his family in Lloyd's car and she found it cheaper to travel by common carrier. He, he, hum.....

As proclaimed loud and far and wide by me, my Wednesday afternoons are always busy as Wednesday afternoon is generally the only time



12157

in the week I have somebody to give me a hand in giving the house a going over. I especially wanted to work on a few points this afternoon since there will be lots of people passing this way between now and a week hence. And so Andy arrived to give me a hand and shortly thereafter James put in an appearance and hard on his heels came Juanita B. and daughter and it was four o'clock before they withdrew and darkness descends at five o'clock which left little to show for a supposed afternoon of domestic labor.

Juanita B. brought me some frozen potato soup of her own making, --frozen, and a fine looking pound cake which I thought very kind of her. Her potato soup is just grand if a dab of salt is added and her cakes wonderful. I shouldn't be hungry tonight but I am and am going to thaw out the block of soup and have a go at same before the night is over.

A call from The Enterprise this morning reported the receipt of two letters at that place, one for Mrs. Walker and one for me, both penned by Esther Lape. Why La Lape should have sent her letter to me in care of the paper, I cannot imagine since I had written her a few weeks back on local stationery. I asked the letter be read to me and it was purely business, stating that both U. N. and the 53rd Street whatever had both expressed interest in the CaneRiver Harvest and CaneRiver Gour tiles but both had made it clear they would not be interested in the Cotton Crucifixion which La Lape expressed herself as feeling was the most interesting of the three, even as do I. I can understand how the deep South might shy away from the Cotton Crucifixion but I never dreamed international shops in New York would do so but that simply goes to show how difficult it is to anticipate what will be accepted and what rejected.

Circumstances prevented me from dwelling with the 18th century pavilions during the day but tonight I'm going to dwell with them.....

12158

Thursday, December 20th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Foggy all morning, with cloudiness and mildness characterizing the balance of the day.

The Festival of the Birds remains the nicest Christmas card coming to hand this season. It continues gracing my desk and nodding sedately with each tap of the keys.

The card today from Rean is pretty in its way although the news about Mary and Herbert Rhodes is the most striking part of the greeting since it indicates that although Mary's mind has gone and Herbert is ill, they are both in Icksburg which somehow strikes me as a great triumph in something or other because I have felt from the time the news reached me of their decision to move to Metarie, that was about the poorest place they could begin life all over again and with Rean's card, I feel grateful to God that even though at the end of life's journey, they are better somewhere, --anywhere other than Metarie. Odd it is what various ingredients go into rounding out the happy holiday season.

I haven't had a report from either the publisher or the editor of the Enterprise regarding the difficulties experienced in getting out this week's issue of the paper. Clara Genung confided in me today, however, that in spite of formidable doings the paper did indeed appear although at this bend of the river the postman failed to deliver either of the town publications which will probably put in an appearance on the morrow. It seems that perhaps the most telling crimp put in getting the paper into the light of print came when all the lights went out. This was caused, according to my informant, by some mix up as between a city trash truck and a utility pole, one result of which was that the truck sailed away unwittingly bearing among other things the electricity meter and a measure of the electric power line serving the neighborhood which certainly must have toned down the mazda lamps considerably.



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A neighbor of Pat in Pecan Park called this noon to ask if he might bring down Clye Miller, --Summer Dancers, this afternoon. Natalie had asked about the same thing a few months back when Miller returned to Northwestern after having been on the faculty at Hunter. Perhaps Natalie and the aforesaid Miller will honor me with a visit in the spring before Mr. Miller leaves for Houston where he will join the faculty of Rice.

James dropped in just ahead of Messrs Kinsey and Miller and after I had given the new-comers a tour, we all four joined hands at Yucca for a briefgathering at port and conversation. It was all very pleasant but I broke the gathering up within half an hour by lying and saying I had some more people waiting for me which I didn't in one way although I did in another since there were a couple of sons of the soil who required supervision in moving some crepe myrtles. What with the sun having risen in fog at 7:13 and folded up behind clouds at 5:13, one doesn't find too much time for out of door labors after time taken by pilgrims is deducted.

A Christmas gift today arrived from Daisy in the Dell, a pair of hand knitted bed slippers duplicating the ones I received last year from the same quarter.

I think I mentioned Monday J. H. had gone to Boyce or Alexandria to a barbecue after close of day. Perhaps I didn't mention on Tuesday he drove after close of day to another barbecue some place that involved at least a hundred miles or perhaps 150, also after dark. The Tuesday he took him into the Hedges Gardens area where he drove above and viewed what he reported as a fine sight, --miles of lakemargin, hills and whatnot festooned with pretty lights. I don't know where he went last night or where he may be tonight. Irby Hett, Abe Wood, Horace Hughes, etc., were here for perch supper. J. H. was present but said he had to go on somewhere for supper and so didn't eat much. One wonders how long this business can keep going. I think about Lyme and especially Miss L. and no newspapers these days.

10151

12160

Friday, December 21st, 1962.

Memorandum:

I listened for the weather bureau to announce at what precise minute winter would be making his bow but his name was never mentioned but I assume he eventually got here. We had an inch and a tenth of rain last night and it was on the warm side, sort of 65. The clouds continued all day and tonight but the warmth did not continue when a wind blew out of the North and chilled things down to the 40's.

On the in-coming mail side, I discovered today that I had written and thanked Sarah ruin Jones for a gift which came to hand, as I discovered today, from the Schmidts, the Jones remembrance arriving only today. At least I shall write the Schmidts but one letter of acknowledgement while Say-rah will get two.

I must knock off a note to the H. J. Hedges tonight. They sent a big poinsettia which fills utterly the big chimney in the living room. James came today and one catching sight of it, declared he never knew they grew so enormously in incredible expanse. I told him it was the four thousand five hundred acre variety, that being the acreage of the Hedges gardens, it is said.

James gave me quite a turn when he dropped in this afternoon around 1:30. I moved him to a seat on the sofa in the living room while I rounded up a couple of cokes. When I sat down on the other end of the sofa, she shouted at me with a volume I had never suspected he possessed. "Watch out", I believe he said, and I jumped creaked, having not the slightest idea of what the warning signified. As I jumped up, I noticed a flying squirrel must have jumped on my knee as I parked my hips on the sofa. James had not heard of



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the presence of some n and about the peace and he took it for another type of rodent. He opened the door on the gallery and Mr. Flying Squirrel, after some persuasion, moseyed out on the gallery. Perhaps he will be back to see me later tonight although it is already after 9 and he should have made it by now, I should think, if he plans to return for a call before . call it a day.

I. S. Willard just called, announcing her return to town from south Louisiana and expressing the hope that I had 't changed my plans about Christmas dinner at her home. I told her I had turned the whole matter over to the Registers and any time she decides to have us will be jus fine and if she will notify them, they will arrange for the transportation.

I talked with Thelma earlier in the day, she calling to inquire if she and John might come this way this weekend. She said they had planned to remain at Northwestern but woul stay only until Tuesday, after which they will go to Houma or some such place where Senator Ellender's brother lives. It seems the brother's son, --the Senator's nephew, talked with the Senator in Cairo on the 'phone, I guess it was last night and the Senator said he would like to have just a few friends to dine with the family on his return from Africa which, I take t, must be she fly. And so Thelma and John will go down and I am glad I shall have their cars before they leave although the pot shots I take at the Senator will cut little ice since John is awfully slender-ish in racial and economic matters. Still it will be fun taking a swing at Ellender-ism regardless.

I ddi'n't see J. H. at supper as he was planning to attend an R. E. A. frolic in town and I assume Celeste was going with him. He keeps on taking the lady doctor's pills but wonders why they give them to him and so do I.....

12162

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Sunday, December 23rd, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and chilly.

The mails continue fairly heavy, containing the usual number of pretty cards, so many of them from half remembered people and remembrances from unexpected quarters.

A case in point arrived Saturday in the gift section, a sizeable package of Oregon pears from Bertha and Hope Haupt, of Hatchitokes, girls I have known for some 20 odd years, old friends of Miss Cam, Miss Kate and so on, girls in their upper 70's, I guess, from whom I never before had a message. Naturally one wonders what suddenly induces a Christmas gift.. he pears are fully as fine if not finer than those grown locally and as I am not nearly so fond of raw pears as are some of my friends, I shall be happy to share some with them.

Saturday seems so far away, I don't remember anything of interest and I had no visitors in particular. Today was a different story, however, and I am grateful the weather made strolling in the garden so easy.

Thelma Kyser and daughter, Janet, were my first visitors this afternoon. They brought a basket full of goodies which I shall nibble on during the days ahead. Some were from the Hysterical Ladies, I guess, and some from Thelma and I shall enjoy them equally, regardless of source.

The 'phone rang while they were here and it was Carmen, saying she and her sister would like to come down right away if that was alright with me.

Carmen didn't arrive until almost first dark. She said just as she was ready to start out, her Aunt Mae Breazeale blew in and although she had told her they were about to take off for the country, Auntie had remained glued to her chair for hours.



12163

I was mildly taken aback when Carmen, on entering, had caught sight of the big poinsettia in the fireplace, had halted, drawn back a little and exclaimed:

"I never saw such a tremendous one. Who in the world gave it to you."

Obviously her question was out of order but it was no secret and besides, I suspect Thelma may have remarked to her at some time during the past 24 hours that the truck bearing the plant had paused at the college to deliver one and had asked for directions at that point as to how one might discover a place called Melrose. I am quite sure Carmen did not receive such a greeting from A. J. Hedges and probably was a little annoyed that Thelma and I should have received same and she did not since she is forever telling me how A. J. Hedges is always being so cordial to her. Naturally I did not tell her that a card had also come from A. J., made out in my favor, giving me entrance to the gardens throughout the year. I think that such a piece of information might well have wrecked her. Carmen brought me the usual slice of fruit cake and a diminutive bottle of arthichoke roots, pickled for eating and not for planting, thank Heaven, for I do not care for ground artichokes much but J. H. is very about same and I shall be enchanted to pass the little bottle across the fence.

Carmen reported that the arthichokes radio at 3 o'clock had predicted a low of 24 for tonight and so, after everyone had departed and Robert Anthony and his son, Morel, had passed this way, I got them to lend me a hand at covering a few of the more delicate plants against tonight's freeze.

The Dan Henrys had put in an appearance between Thelma's departure and Carmen's arrival, bearing a Christmas gift but I saw only June, the wife, and the children, as Dan was upstairs in the big house. And so the weekend ensued and so I turn to some must letters and thence to the radio to see what has been cooking around the world.....

12164

Monday, December 24th, 1962.

Memorandum:

It rained an inch and a tenth during the night and kept drizzling right along all day. It was chilly, too, and about as miserable a day as one could imagine outside but, of course, doubly cozy inside by way of contrast.

That suburbia hasn't swallowed up the Cane River countryside seemed evident enough when a man living between here and Bermuda came along, his car piled high with various types of game for the Christmas table. Each type of game was not dressed and the resulting assortment of furred and feathered neighbors presented quite a striking sight. There were rabbits, hawks, possums, raccoons, wild geese, ducks and so on, not to mention a variety of fish.

The hunter would stop his car at every cluster of cabins and housewives would rush out to make their selections. was curious to discover which representative of our untamed neighbors proved the most appealing to the few shoppers I witnessed selecting their prime items for Christmas dinner, --hawk, possum and rabbit in about that order although a raccoon fell in close behind in the popular demand and ducks and geese close behind. The purveyor of these wares, so near as I could make out, numbered no wild turkeys although there are said to be plenty of the undomesticated "great American bird" in these parts. Possibly the demand for wild turkey is such that the hunter had already disposed of them before reaching this neighborhood. Lots of people around here raise their own domesticated turkeys, geese, ducks, hogs and so on and I suppose many families, --in fact, I know of several families whose sons invariably hunt rabbits, squirrels and possum with sufficient success to provide the Christmas table with an abundance of wild game. I ought to do a column on this subject just for the responses that might be forthcoming by those who leave it to others to purchase rather than round up their own resistance pieces for Christmas.



12165

James came down around 2, wearing high rubber overshoes which he certainly needed to negotiate the mud puddles successfully.

Natalie called around 3 and said she wasn't going to be able to get down but her two Julian sons would be bearing gifts shortly. They did indeed arrive shortly afterward, bringing two records, one of which was the first family one and a musical number, the title of which I forget. There were some apple pies, too, and I was happy to add these to the collection of affluous items already gracing the ice box. Carrie Merin, who lives next to the spillway on the opposite side of the road from where the artist formerly dwelt, also sent a sweet potato and pie while Dereatha, the local cook, presented me with a fine pumpkin pie.

Jarved Pratt came in about 3:30, bearing two bottles of wine, one of which he said his aunt, Mrs. Murphy, of Eldorado, Arkansas, had sent and the other was from him. He regaled James and me with his impressions of Mexico and ended up by offering me a trip down there this spring that wouldn't cost me a penny. Imagine.

The J. Pratt and the J. Register contingent having departed, the clerk with wife and son passed this way to leave a gift and it was time for me to go across the fence to sup since the cook had been given the evening off. It was still sprinkling and I was glad to return to Yucca by the warmth of my own fireside and get busy doing a flock of work I had neglected all day.

Atmospherically, it was a dread enough day but it was pleasant enough inside and I am delighted to enjoy the quiet obtaining before calling it a day.....

12166

Tuesday, December 25th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy without rain and continued 40-ish.

Yesterday James had brought me a carton of paper cups, thinking they would be more convenient than glasses for my Christmas morning reception and I certainly appreciated the innovation. I found them quite serviceable and an interesting tally sheet in that I stacked them one atop another as departing callers came this morning and discovered from the cup tabulation, one hundred and two different users were here and about 20 callers either indulged in cokes or abstained from any type of libation. I was appreciative of the carton of wine J. H. sent from the store about mid morning.

I don't recognize all of my Christmas morning callers because some of them I frequently see and because some of them are rigged up in such fine Sunday clothes I don't recognize them. Sometimes I don't even recognize those whom I should but that always brings a laugh and so we all have fun about that. A case in point was two youths who arrived, identifying themselves as Joe and Emmett. I recognized Joe as a Williams but Emmett I did not. He turned out to be the artist's grandson, whom we all call Junior, as he is a son of Jackie and Clyde Claude Emmett Davis. After they had departed, two more gentlemen arrived and the first one said he was Clyde, and thinking only of Clyde Claude Emmett Davis, I had to ask him again and he turned out to be Dereatha's brother, Clyde Anthony. The other gentleman said he was Emmett and I said:

"Lordy, Lord, I thought you were just here".

Then we all laughed at my stupidity when it turned out he was indeed Emmett. --Clyde Claude Emmett Davis.

Angy did arrive until 10:30. He said he had started out from home, --the one time house of the artist near the spillway, and had met somebody along the



12165

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read who told him he was late and Andy explained he wasn't working. The man had responded, asking him if he didn't know it was Christmas and Andy didn't, having supposed Christmas would be on the morrow, and so the morning passed by.

James came at 12 and picked me up. We were both surprised that a rather heavy fog settled down around Bayou Hachez as we proceeded to town, --fog at noonday being unusual. We stopped for Kay at Pecan Park but she wanted to take a nap before we proceeded to I. S. Willard's. And so she retired and James gave me an ample charger of wine which I needed as I had not had anything to eat all morning and hadn't taken a sip so felt quite empty. Around 2 we drove to I. S. Willard's and proceeded to have a fine dinner half an hour later. Kay said she couldn't sample the hors d'oeuvres which seemed harmless enough to me. I. S. W. had made two dinners, one cooked for James, herself and me, the other for Kay which I thought very kind of her. I knew not what she ate but I notice she did reject the special dessert contrived for her benefit while the rest of us toyed with three different desserts, --mince pie, ffilow and caramel and inoe cream, which, in the wake of the turkey and other excellent fare, seemed extraneous.

The Carvers called and invited us four to their house to join with Ada Jack and others for afternoon tea but Kay wanted to go home and so we said goodbye to our hostess and departed, dropping Kay at Pecan Park and James bringing me home in time for me to give the birds and furred friends their Christmas supper. Celeste called along about then, inviting me to sup across the fence and I went over, not so much for the food which I didn't need but rather to say Merry Christmas belatedly. She reported their dinner with the J. M. junior and senior Henrys had gone off nicely enough and everybody seemed happy. So the major holiday turns and now I shall do a little work, after which I hope to catch up on some news about which I have heard nothing all day.....

12168

12168

Wednesday, December 26<sup>th</sup>, 1962.

Memorandum:

A heavy shower last night followed by cloudy skies and the thermometer "heaving" around 40 all day.

There was a knock on the front door of the big house at 13 noon today, just as we were finishing out demitasses. It was Del and Harry Chockley. They were heading from Lake Charles to some place in Texas, perhaps Dallas, and had stopped off here to say howdy. They did not sit down and as they had been to Yucca to leave a gift before retracking me down at the big house, they did not return to Yucca but rather were off in their car again for the Lone Star State. I thought they both seemed fine and I was delighted to see them but the meeting at best was a mere hail and farewell sort of thing.

The mail resumed somewhat heavy and as I have not read Monday's mail as yet, I reckon I shall not get a round to explore Wednesday before the morrow. The plantation is usually slow down to no pace at all as between Christmas and New Years. One consequence is that everybody is feet loose and roaming about and this concerns the secretariat as well. Several secretaries put in appearances on and off during the afternoon but it happened each time that some body was carshing about such as Joe Henry in search of mandarin bushes and such like so that things never did dovetail perfectly and so I let the mail slide until the morrow.

There are, of course, too many people visiting Hachiteches and environs at the moment and it is inevitable, naturally, that I should get many of them pushed in my direction.

Mr. Walker called this afternoon to say the paper would give me a week's vacation by not printing the one I had written for this week which will appear this next week. That suits me just fine although the subject matter would have made better reading this week than next since it is about the da Vinci masterpiece.



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Of course the real reason for the call was to ask if I would receive Mr. Walker's sister of Phenix, Arizona, and a school teacher friend, a native of Saskatoon, Canada, who is also a school teacher. I declined seeing them, already having too many Henrys about and too much coming and going in other departments. I recommended the morrow instead and that see to suit everyone. I am hoping there may be a gleam of sunshine on the morrow and less people but about both of these points one is given little encouragement by the weather bureau which is predicting more clouds and more rain through Friday. I guess this section was lucky on Monday and Tuesday as opposed to Georgia which got the same rain we received but, unlike us, their moisture was accompanied by a freeze that snapped trees, electric wires and so on serving the Atlanta and adjacent counties. That must have made for vast inconvenience during Christmas Eve and Christmas Day when the electricity was absent. What all that did to deep freeze boxes, Christmas tree electric lights, electric blankets and the Lord know what all, not to mention radio, TV and the like, I cannot imagine. except for utter darkness and slim doings in the festivities of those two major dates.

On Christmas Day, when we were in town, Kay asked me if I ever received the cart wheel cheese, a big old 8 or 10 pounder she had ordered sent direct to me from some place in Michigan or Wisconsin. I had not. She called me just now to say she wanted to talk with me about it again, I having told her on Sunday that I had already thanked two people for the same gift coming from up that way, each of whom apparently were the senders of the gifts although somehow things had been switched around as to source. Then she asked me if I had received a little earthen pot of cheese spread, -- for which I had already thanked Sarah Jones and the Schumids, and I said I had and she said she just remembered she had sent it to me but had not sent along any card to accompany the gift when the purchase was made by mail. I must do a column on that.....

12170

Thursday, December 27th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Cloudy to partly cloudy with the thermometer pretty much standing in the same place, -- 40, -- all around the clock.

This seems to have been one of my busier days in which nothing was accomplished but constant visitations and interruptions followed fast on each other's heels.

Last night John Wenk came in rather late and nobody knew he was here until after 8 o'clock this morning when he be-stirred himself somewhere upstairs in the big house.

He seems to find a measure of satisfaction plus, perhaps, a dab of comfort, in talking with me since he possibly finds me interested in his scholastic enthusiasms, -- he is now in medical school in New Orleans, and he seems to sense that I can some conception of his loneliness in having nobody of his immediate family to understand the yids and the rackets yapping at him from that quarter. In any event, I always find it a privilege to converse with him and I was glad to lend an ear both before and after noonday dinner. I believe he returned to New Orleans after his round at Shreveport and that was John.

A flock of plantation folks dribbled in and out during the morning before 10 and after 11 and I was glad to look forward to 10 minutes of news time immediately after demi-tasse, being especially anxious to listen to the weather bureau to see if I would be wise to cover more tender plants tonight since freezes seem around and about but not right here.

But I just got the radio turned on when somebody announced the summer-autumnal painters were here with relatives from Pennsylvania,



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requesting a tour. I gave it to them but wondered how they selected such a hour, knowing well how the noon hour pans out here. As they were leaving, James appeared and I was glad to tell him that he might help me entertain Mrs. Walker, her son, her sister-in-law and a lady of Saskatoon, all on the docket for the afternoon and arriving in just five minutes, indeed they did. The session was too long but it was pleasant enough all around but it was almost supper time when they finally departed and I had several plantation people waiting for me to help them with little letters and things so that it was nearly 7 before I could divorce myself from human beings.

Then I tried to grab a wisp of news and got enough with the announcement that the Federal Government will issue a new stamp next October 11th, honoring Mrs. Roosevelt as First Lady of the World.

Somewhere along the way, between 10 and 11, I had an opportunity to explore some of the text of the 18th century pavilions and find it wonderful. Naturally I concentrated on the place marked by the slips of paper. I was especially delighted with the Villa Trianon and the Malmaison Folie texts and the of Leveciennes, with the wonderful flavor super-imposed on the pertinent facts concerning the places and the name of Elizabeth Marbury at Villa Trianon was especially welcomed for I had not thought of that lady in a long time, her gavettes with Bent and Anna de Castellane, her kindness to Wilde and her insistence on Joseph Pulitzer purchasing Wilde poems and so on. I am so longing to explore the text further and rejoice at the pleasures awaiting me and blessing little Miss Lee for all she does on my behalf. I think if one had time, the reading of Elizabeth Marbury's Memoires would be delightful. --My Crystal Ball was the title, as I recall.

At 9 o'clock coffee, mine hostess reminded me she gives her eggnog party tomorrow night. --Dee, Atala, the Reverend Fathers and so on and so the season turns.....

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12172

Friday, December 28th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Rain began sliding down slowly about 5 this morning and hasn't let up its gentle patter. The thermometer remains almost motionless in the 40's.

I certainly never had the vaguest intention of attending tonight's eggnog across the fence. I had even less as the day progressed and mud puddles spread wider and wider across the gardens. There was a fine big pool slap in front of the hostess's house at 9 this morning and it must have been oceanic by first dark tonight. I shall be all attention on the morrow at the coffee hour when reports come through as to whether the guests on leaving their cars swam or floated to reach the cement walk in front of the house..

At supper I learned that around 2 this afternoon, Joel Fletcher with a bevy of ladies arrived unannounced in front of the store but before discharging his guests, tried to turn around the car, getting bogged down for half an hour which persuaded him conditions under foot weren't favorable for a tour and so drove slap off. He was so right.

I. Sillard just called. She said Ada Jack and somebody wanted to come down sometime in the future. It seems Ada Jack and somebody else had made it a point to descend on the I. S. Willard home on Christmas, expecting to find guests there but the aforesaid guests had flown hours before Ada Jack arrived.

I. S. Willard reports that Ada's son, David Snell, has just been or is just about to be elevated to some superior place on the staff of Life, to figure among the Editorial great, which seems to be quite a fine appointment. I. S. W. assumes



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the job will make more or less permanent the metropolitan residence which ought to please the Snells since they have purchased a house somewhere on Long Island. Come to think of it, I believe the Snells purchased homes when living in Europe both in some London suburb and at Boulogne-sur-Seine, when in Paris. This reminds me that there seem to be quite a few people in the property buying category when arriving in a new town where they expect to reside. I have known of several who have rushed in, grabbed some property, fixed it up to suit their needs and then, of course, getting acquainted with the region, cast about for a different place to buy, sold their first investment and then gone on to make their second choice a permanent residence. I take it the Snells may be in this category. There's a story making the rounds of a white guinea or incredible size figuring in the Melrose flock. At the moment, the number of guineas around and about totals 4, the white papa and the gray mama and their two gray offspring. It seems that sometime early in the month, pilgrims passing this way waited for me on the gallery of the big house and while there, they heard the guineas making the various calls guineas make and a servant told the guests they would probably see them off under the big oak. Well, they did see four birds there, the three gray guineas and what they took to be the white one. They inquired if that could indeed be a guinea and they were assured it was. But the pilgrims and the servant and were eyeing different birds for the white guinea was missing but the white peacock was ranging with the gray guinea hens. So the story got going, once the pilgrims had gone and today I had a call from the wire service, asking me to confirm the phenomenon of a guinea as big as a house or some such. And so runs the week and so I must hop, skip and jump toward my downy couch.....

12174

Sunday, December 30th, 1962.

Memorandum:

Partly cloudy in the cool 40's.

There seem to be quite a few people from thither and yon visiting Parish folks and Parish folks seem to think the idea to go plantation touring a good one regardless of the dampness under foot.

Irby Nott called about 8 Saturday morning, saying a cousin of his, formerly living in Madrid but currently at Northwestern, had a Long Island friend visiting her and might they come. They might.

Clyde Claude Emmett Davis dropped in to say the water would be cut off for a couple of hours, thereby giving my beard a chance to get a little longer before the razor caught up with it. I pointed out the peacocks to C. C. E. Davis. They were parked on benches and chairs on the back gallery, in a straight row, all looking in the same direction and never moving a feather. I opined they looked like Quakers in church, saying nothing. C. C. E. Davis conjectured:

"Sure does look like church, maybe they's studyin' about going to community."

Communion, community or whatever, there they parked until Irby's ladies fluttered in and the peacocks flutter out.

James appeared a little after 2. He was bearing of all things, a dish of pudding, explaining that as he had parked his car at the cattle gap, Sister had hailed him from some place, having just arrived with her daughter from Shreveport, and asked him to bring the pudding to me as she would not be able to get over.

Need I say that 10 minutes later she had indeed



12175

arrived and chatter got under way a mile a minute until James lied and said he had to be back in town a little after 3 and so must be going. Sister said she had to get into the big road right then and there, too, but she and daughter were still here at supper time but, I am happy to report, they apparently did take off for I saw neither hide nor hair of them today.

What with the limited time to discuss domestic matters with the husband, I learned little that was new but it appears a jaunt to Mayo's by the wife is just in the offing. With the lady doctor in full agreement with the several other physicians of highest standing in the State, there is nothing physically wrong with the patient although the imagination in the hypochondriac department is apparently working over time. Since there was obviously not urgency in journeying to Wisconsin or where ever in the snowbanks the Mayo establishment is located, the husband suggested it might be more comfortable and convenient to make such a jaunt when the weather has moderated a little but the impulse to go through more and more hospitals never slackens and probably a flight to snowbank land is just in the offing. It must be an expensive whim, all this attention by top physicians around the country but as it can well be afforded, it constitutes a game that is comparatively harmless at the moment but one can only wonder whether it will end and if the impulse will eventually end up in psychiatric problems. Everybody in town has given up trying to establish contacts and, as at the arrival of the couple in town last February, the retreat into solitude has already about reached 100 percent effectiveness. Everything and nothing and one can only wonder what lies ahead.

I shall do what I can to hold up the hands of those most intimately concerned with the problem but it certainly is a problem.....

12176

Monday, December 31st, 1962.

Memorandum:

Fair and sort-a 40.

From radio reports, I gather it is neither fair nor 40 in the Lyme area although all the reports coming to hand have skipped precise mention of the place but have touched on surrounding areas, leading me to believe Lyme might be in the same unenviable situation.

There was quite a heavy mail today, --including a letter from Lyme, much to my delight even though I did not enjoy the services of a secretary. Two came around 2 p.m., but Ames had dropped in and I let correspondence rest in the armoire until regular sessions with the secretariat came be effected. I made it a point to make hard and fast appointments for the morrow with at least two such helpers but tonight James called to say he and Kay would like me to break bread with them at the Town House on the morrow, --an invitation I tried to brush off but people in their bracket can't imagine other people being busy and I had already learned from a 'phone conversation tonight with I. S. Willard that Kay is planning to take off on Saturday, perhaps, for Mayo's and, just as James had predicted, that lady from the Bluff has decided she ought to go there, too. That's what happened in North Carolina last summer and the elder got into the center of things and everybody thought she was the patient and not the younger person on crutches.

I had a bit of local gossip to divert James on his visit today. Although he sees the artist several times a week and gains much by way of background as to her experiences and foreground as to her philosophy, he probably extracts little or nothing as to her romances. Thus he was interested in this dab of information. A while back,



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12177

Pa, --Joseph Metoyer, for whom she has a passion, was found to have tuberculosis and was taken to a hospital for such afflictions up Shreveport way. But Pa decided he wouldn't stay in the place and so blandly walked out. Returning to this Parish, he didn't park in town but rather came directly to the home of his married daughter who lives up the Bermuda road a piece. There are small children in the family and the husband objected to the presence of a tubercular patient in the house. Pa was spending each day with the daughter and children and at night was a guest at the artist's house, a sort of dusk to dawn arrangement. Well, the daughter's husband took up the matter with Joseph Metoyer, Jr., who lives down the river a piece and they tried to get Pa back in the sanitorium up Shreveport way but that place wouldn't take him back as they were already more than wedged out. Then a sanitorium off Baton Rouge-New Orleans way was found and last night or the night before, the representatives of the State came to the artist's house and whisked her guest away to the South Louisiana institution.

James was amazed at the tale I related, especially as suddenly it occurred to him that some many things the artist had said of late somehow fitted into the outline I had sketched. She had, for instance, remarked a "cousin" had gone to some hospital in South Louisiana and did he know the name of the place and so on. The screaming part of the business James had to relate, however, was the fact that for Christmas, among other things, he had purchased a fancy nightgown and a fancy boudoir robe for Kay who proved to great for them whereupon they had been presented to the artist and if there were ever a time gift, that must have been it. And so the romances of the artist go forward and I, for one, never heard anything quite like same.

I am holding the thought that today may have been a holiday at you know where and that the morrow may provide moments for getting the New Year going sedately. Tonight I am following my old custom of communing with kindred spirits, re-counting to myself all the blessing that have been mine because of my Lady of the Lamp.....



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12177

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